

Companions United

by Ruth Joyce

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Summary: (Book 1) When Pitch Black and Mother Gothel join forces, the weakened Guardians look to the Moon for help. Suddenly, Jack Frost, Hiccup Haddock III, and Merida DunBroch are thrown together on the adventure of a lifetime. But things get complicated when Manny leads them to Pitch and Gothel's beautiful daughter Rapunzel, and Jack gets distracted. Rated T for violence and peril.

1. Chapter 1: Evil Lurks

****Author's Note:** Hey everyone! Welcome to Companions United! This Rise of the Brave Tangled Dragons story takes place mainly in the late 1800's-haven't worked out the exact date yet-and partly in the 14th Century (you'll find out what I mean in the next few chapters). This is my first fanfic so I'm still getting the hang of things.**

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****Anyway, enjoy the 1st chapter!****

* * *

><p>Gothel lounged carelessly in an enchanted wooden rocker. Like any other evil mastermind, she was bored. Incredibly, utterly bored.<p>

"Gothel, quit slouching!" Maggie, Gothel's mother said. "You don't look evil when you slouch." Her pet crow squawked. "Not evil!"

"And I don't look evil when I sit up straight and tall, do I?" she complained grouchy.

Maggie sighed irritably. "Well if you're going to be like that, let's learn some spells."

Gothel perked up at that, and soon they were mixing away; the giant cauldron glowed ominously. Suddenly they heard a dreadful racket outside.

"Keep it down out there!" the old witch yelled. "Trying to do some evil!"

As their doors and windows blew open, the two women could see people running and in fear, and building collapsing. Black, filmy horses raced around. Nightmares. Eagerly, Gothel raced out, she could almost smell the evil in the air. Laughing gleefully, she snapped her fingers and more buildings collapsed. She heard the sound of a rushing wind, and turned. Standing before her was a tall man with a long thin face and golden eyes.

"Well well well. What do we have here?" he said with an evil smile. "A woman who dares to interfere with my evil." "On the contrary," Gothel said fearlessly. "I am a witch!"

Maggie limped out of the house. "Oh great, the village is destroyed. Now who will buy my woodcarvings!"

"As is my mother," she pointed to the old crone, "and I was contributing. Your little ponies missed a few." She snapped and a tower crumbled to the ground.

"Impressive," the man said.

"And who are you?" Maggie snapped. He chuckled almost pityingly, not believing the old woman did not know him.

"I am fear itself," he said darkly. "Pitch Black."

Gothel looked him straight in the eyes. "The name's Gothel. Not a common name, I'm sure you've never heard of it. But it makes us even, I've never heard of fear."

"I could see that the moment I laid eyes on you," Pitch said with a calculating stare. "Do you know, we could make a great team."

Gothel's eyes lit up. Finally, a chance to do some real evil!

* * *

><p>Pitch advanced menacingly up the stairs into Ms. Hattie's Home for Girls. He didn't like the idea of adopting; you could never tell how much good was in a child's natural instinct. But Gothel had insisted. Pitch was incapable of love, but needed Gothel's magic, so he wanted to keep her happy. She wanted to begin rearing a sidekick, so here they were.<p>

"Remember, you have to try and look pleasant," Gothel whispered.

"They're horrible about background checks here, but if we look too evil they'll throw us out."

Pitch nodded slightly, and put on a false smile. A few moments later, they were being interviewed by Hattie herself.

"Well, your forms seem to be in order. And I see you've made a list of your accomplishments. Thank you for that, I love reading." Pitch rolled his eyes. "Diploma for scaring, diploma for havoc wreaking, destroyed 5 villages, including...what's this? The island of Berserk?" Hattie shook her head and kept reading. "A Master's degree in spell brewing, 8 inns have been demolished, a Bachelor's in acting, and you've destroyed 15 corn farmsâ€¦ Not that impressive." Pitch glared at her, and Gothel smiled awkwardly. "Okayâ€¦" Hattie leaned over to the intercom. "Please bring Rapunzel down to the lobby."

Moments later, Gothel was handed a beautiful baby girl. Her hair was golden blonde, and she had huge green eyes. Even though she was only a few weeks old, she looked around with an innocent curiosity that worried Pitch. After a few more documents were signed, the family returned to Pitch's dark castle.

* * *

><p>"Rapunzel!" Pitch snapped, exasperated. "We do not chase after butterflies. We must destroy them!"<p>

"I don't wanna hurt the butterfly," 3-year old Rapunzel cried.

Pitch screamed in frustration. "Enough!" he roared. "She is not evil and she never will be!"

"She's still young," Gothel protested.

"We've been trying for 3 years!" Pitch yelled. Rapunzel began to cry. "Fear is the only thing that is in her. Fear is supposed to be the driving force in evil, and it's not working!" He paced up and down the room and Rapunzel cowered. "Now that we have our own child on the way, it's time to get rid of this one. I have no room in this family for _angels_."

"How do we get rid of her? We can't send her back."

"Kill her. No, wait." He stopped and looked back at his sobbing daughter. "Lock her in a tower. Care for her until she's old enough to do it yourself, then leave. If this works, it will make her bitter and angry. If that won't bring out the evil in her, nothing will. And if not, we'll be rid of the annoying nuisance."

Gothel nodded. "Come along, Rapunzel," she said in a deceptively sweet voice. "We're going on a littleâ€¦adventure."

Rapunzel stood and followed Gothel to a Nightmare carriage waiting outside the door. They rode on for hours, passing through Arendelle and Corona, until finally they reached a hidden canyon in the woods. Rapunzel splashed about in the shallow river, watching as her mother used her magic to build a tall tower. Gothel gestured her to enter. The inside of the tower was dark and mysterious. Narrow stairs curved around the walls, it seemed to be going on forever. At last, they

came to a room that completely filled the tower space. Gothel snapped her fingers, and it became a kitchen and dining room. Then she continued up the stairs to a second room. This was soon transformed into a kind of living room, with a small bedroom off to one side.

"That will be my room," she said.

"Where's mine?"

"Up those steps, in the roof." She snapped her fingers again, and windows appeared. One had a paneled glass and a window seat, but the other was open air. Rapunzel stared out into the valley. They were so high up. "Do you see that, Rapunzel?" Gothel said. "This window will be your only link to the world. You will never leave this tower again."

* * *

><p>Pitch crept up to the crib in the corner of the room. Suddenly he leaned over. "Boo!" The little black haired girl cried, terrified. Pitch leaned in close, watching. The baby snarled and hit him, angrily screaming. He drew back and laughed evilly.<p>

Gothel walked up. "This one's got potential."

"Oh, Mavis will be evil someday," he said joyfully. "Just you wait!"

* * *

><p>Rapunzel was 10 years old, and her mother had just left for the last time. She now fully understood her situation, and there was nothing she could do about it. The doors to the tall stair way had been sealed off. She could not escape.<p>

However, Rapunzel knew that she could manage. She could cook and sew, and there was an endless supply of fabric and food that would not spoil. She had many books (both fantasy and educational) and plenty of paint to last a long time. Mother Gothel would return once a year to see if she needed anything else, and that was a relief. In the past few years she had come about once a month, and each time grew more and more hateful to her former daughter. So Rapunzel was glad to be rid of her.

But it was so lonely. There was no one to talk to. Exceptâ€|every now and then the Moon would speak. She didn't know why, but it was something. It was full tonight, and rising majestically. He seemed to be sitting on the cliff top; so close. Rapunzel looked up longingly.

"Please," she whispered. "Can you help me get out of here?"

* * *

><p>Author's Note: So a lot of jumping back and forth but if you'll notice the time span is about 10 years, and I didn't want to take too much time on the intro. Cause this is basically an intro (or prologue; call it what you will) to the villains and the story, I just call it Chapter One.

****Now even though this story is completed, I love getting reviews! Please feel free to point out any plot-holes, weak spots, or grammar errors. I combed it several times but I have a tendency to get caught up in the story and read without really paying attention to errors...So anyway please review!****

2. Chapter 2: The Portal

"Merida!" a rough Scotsman called out. "Come try out your new bow!"

Little Merida jumped out of her mother's arms, her red frizzy hair flying in all directions. Her father handed her a bow that was nearly as big as her. The 5 year old quickly aimed and fired; a bullseye, right in the middle.

"Well done lass!" someone said behind them. The family turned to see another tall, broad viking.

"Uncle Stoick!" Merida cried happily. She leapt into his arms.

"Welcome, brother!" Fergus said, extending a hand. "What brings you half a league across the sea to our wee island?"

"I bring news, both good and bad. I would have come sooner butâ€¦well, you know how running a kingdom is. A village is just as busy, on a smaller scale." Fergus laughed.

Elinor saw the sadness behind Stoick's eyes and drew in her breath. "What's the bad news?" she asked tentatively.

"Valka," Stoick said, his voice catching. "She was taken by a dragon in one of their vicious raids."

"She's was a strong fighter," Fergus commented. "Was she sick?"

"No, but she wasn't carrying a weapon. You know all those ridiculous, radical notions of hers. She believed that dragons were good creatures and that we shouldn't kill them. It's ironic, really."

"Oh, Stoick, I'm so sorry," Elinor said. She had been good friends with Valka in their younger days.

"What's the good news, Uncle Stoick?" Merida asked, not sure why everyone was sad.

"You have a cousin, Merida, lass," he said happily. "A wee lad; we call him Hiccup."

"Oh, how wonderful!" Queen Elinor exclaimed, politely ignoring the last comment. "You must come to dinner soon so we can meet him."

"I'm not sure if he can make the journey, he's so weak and scrawny. He's 3, only two years younger than Merida, but a lot smaller." He whispered to Elinor, "Hopefully he'll grow out of it. You can't have

a hiccup for a chieftain's son."

"I know what you mean," Elinor said quietly. "I'm hoping Merida grows out of this archery phase. She is a princess, not a warrior."

"Aye," Stoick said sarcastically. "And to make matters worse the girl believes in magic!"

"Stoick!" Elinor chided. "I think it's fine for the girl to believe in the old legends, for now. There's no harm in Santa Claus or the Tooth Fairy."

* * *

><p>Merida sauntered happily into the clearing in the woods. She found Hiccup sitting on a rock, idling drawing in the dirt. It was their monthly get together, something they had arranged a few years ago since their parents were too busy to even get together once a year. They had found this small island directly between their homes, and it was perfect.<p>

"Hi, Hiccup!" Merida said cheerfully.

"Hey." Merida looked closely at her cousin's face.

"Why so miserable?" she asked.

"Oh you know, the usual. I run off looking for trolls and other magic creatures, and get a whole lecture about it. I'm a disappointment to my father, disgrace to the village and my family name. I have no freedom."

Instantly Merida's cheerful mood vanished, and her accent grew thicker as her frustration grew. "Talk about no freedom! Mum is always making up new rules. Princesses should do that, princesses do not do this, blah blah blah!" She kicked a rock across the clearing, then had a better idea and drew out her bow. "There are thousands of 'hem, and Ah'm expected to know each and every one." She fired arrows in a rapid succession into the trunk of a massive oak.

"I only have three rules," Hiccup said forlornly. "And I usually end up breaking them. Stay inside, don't mess up, and stop trying to be something you're not." He stood up. "But that's the problem! I'm not trying to be something else, I'm just trying to be me! It's who I am."

"Exactly!" Merida said as she stopped firing. Her arrows had formed an angry, frowning face in the tree. Hiccup smiled slightly. Generally, Merida wasn't that creative, but when she was, it was funny. "We are who we are, but our parents are trying to make us something different."

"Thank you, someone who finally understands!" he said as he sat back down.

The princess shouldered her bow and sat beside him. "We're the only ones who will ever understand each other, Hiccup. So we have ta stick together."

Hiccup sighed. "Maybe we can switch places. Father would like you as

a daughter better than me."

"I'm sure that's not true," Merida said uncertainly. Hiccup looked at her. "Ok, it probably is. Andâ€|honestly, I think Mum would think you make a better prince than I make a princess. But I don't think they'd let us switch."

Hiccup sighed. "So we have to keep sticking together?"

"Right."

* * *

><p>One month later, Hiccup and Merida charged into the clearing at the same time.

"You'll never believe what happened!" they exclaimed simultaneously.

"Ladies first," Hiccup said. Merida giggled.

"Well, it's rather a long story, but here's basically what happened. Mum and I had this huge fight, and I ran away from the castle, cause I just couldn't take it anymore, you know? And then Ah met this witch, and she gave me a spell that would turn my mum into a bear, but Ah didn't know. Anyway we had to leave the castle and on the way we bonded. Then we broke the spell and now we're friends again."

"Wow," Hiccup said. "That is intense." At that moment, a black dragon crawled out of the woods and came behind Hiccup.

"Get down!" Merida cried, drawing her bow.

"What? Oh no, this is Toothless. He won't hurt you."

"A dragon?" She stepped closer, curiosity aroused. "Is he yours?"

"Yep. I caught him during a dragon raid a few weeks ago, shortly after we met last time. I tried to kill him, but I couldn't. I started spending more time with him since he couldn't fly, see his tail? I made the part on the right."

"Amazing," Merida said. She held out a hand and Toothless touched it with his nose.

"Anyway, I ended up training him without telling anybody. That got me in trouble, cause I was expected to kill a dragon, and I couldn't. So then everybody hated me, but _then_ there's this giant dragon, think feet bigger than ships. HUGE."

"What happened?" Merida asked, playing with Toothless.

"We killed him. Not just me and Toothless, but Astrid, who by the way, likes me now, and other kids on Berk."

"That is cool," Merida said.

"Do you want to fly to DunBroch? You could get Angus and we could

race."

Merida's eyes glowed. "You may have a dragon, but I bet Angus can still beat him!" Toothless' ear flicked Merida. "Hey!" Hiccup laughed.

"Climb on."

* * *

><p>"There are really good cookies, Phil," Jack Frost said. The yeti nodded happily and ran off to get more. Jack laughed. Sandy looked at him strangely.<p>

"You're not one to give compliments," Nicholas St. North said, munching his own cookie.

"Yeah, I know. But I did torment the poor guy for several years." He grinned in memory.

After the moon had rescued him from the freezing water, he had been searching for answers. He'd had a hunch that the Guardians could give him answers, and after years of being blocked, Jack finally managed to sneak in last July. Unfortunately, none of the Guardians had answers, but Jack liked to hang around when he wasn't busy, in case they learned something.

"North!" a voice bellowed from the workshop below.

"Hmm, looks like the Easter Kangaroo is back," Jack said. Sandy laughed silently.

"North, there you are," E. Aster Bunnymund said, bounding breathlessly into the room. "Howdy, Jack. We've got a problem mate."

"What is it?" North asked. Toothiana flew into the room, clearly agitated.

"It's Pitch Black! He's destroying villages and spreading fear everywhere. We have to fight him."

"Bunny, tell the yetis to gather their weapons. We leave in one minute!"

"Can I help?" Jack asked. The Guardians looked at each other uncertainly.

"Jack, this is really more of a Guardian thing," Tooth said. "As much as we'd love to have you, I think it's better if Pitch doesn't know we're friends. He's too strong for you."

"But," North said, "You can watch on this handy little device I made. There's no time for me to explain how it works, we've got to go, now."

Jack watched as the Guardians raced off together. Sandy gave him a sympathetic smile as they left. Jack sighed. The invisible boy, left alone even by those who could see him. And even though he understood why, it still hurt.

* * *

><p>An hour later, Jack watched in horror as Sandy was cut off from the group. Nightmares surrounded him and Pitch pierced his back with a black arrow. In an instant, Sandy was gone.<p>

"No!" Jack screamed. Then Bunny went down, he didn't even know how. And it was over in a flash. The sleigh slid into the room, carrying a beaten North and Tooth.

"What just happened?" Jack yelled, hurt.

"Ambush," North groaned. "There were so many, and it happened so fast, and he's got some sort of witch with him."

"But Bunnymund, he's the Easter Bunny," Jack said. "He can't be gone!"

"They aren't dead forever. Sometimes, spirits can return from the dead. So it is possible Sandy and Bunny may return," North said. "I hope."

"When? We need them here!"

"No one knows," Tooth said. She coughed and slid to the floor.

"You ok?"

"My powers are weakening. Some sort of spell the witch had. North, I didn't want it to come to this, but I have to leave. It's the only way I can protect the memories."

"I understand," North said after a moment. "Good luck."

Jack watched his friend fly off quietly, blinking tears from her beautiful purple eyes.

"What are we going to do?" Jack asked despairingly.

North started to speak, but was interrupted. The moon shone down through the window. North got up and looked the figures Manny showed him. Jack wandered over and was startled to see himself among them.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Man in Moon has chosen new special people, called Companions. They are the only ones who can defeat Pitch, and bring back Hope and Dreams!"

"Why am I there?"

"Because you are the first Companion. Jack, this is why you are here."

Finally! Jack thought.

* * *

><p>Merida urged Angus on. "Come on, boy, we've got to beat Hiccup!"<p>

"Not going to happen!" Hiccup called from the sky. Merida glanced up gleefully. Suddenly Angus stopped short, throwing her off despite her skilled horsemanship.

"Angus!" she said angrily. Hiccup and Toothless landed beside her.

"Are you ok?" he asked.

"Yes, butâ€|" she stopped, staring at a swirling portal. Hiccup saw it too.

"Whatâ€|is that?"

"I don't know," Merida said.

Toothless was fascinated with the object, which was glowing red and green light. All of a sudden, he lunged at the portal, taking Hiccup with him. They disappeared.

"Hiccup!" Merida cried. Without thinking, she mounted Angus and forced him in a gallop straight into the portal.

3. Chapter 3: The Mission

**AN: I'm having some technical issues with my laptop and I don't know when I'll be able to make it work correctly, so I'm giving you two chapters in one day to make up for it. Enjoy it while it lasts!
**

* * *

><p>Merida tumbled off Angus for the second time that day. Quickly, she bounced back up and drew her bow; she saw the same thing had happened with Hiccup, except he was holding a knife. Toothless stood behind them and roared on two legs.<p>

"Whoa, take it easy," a tall, lanky boy with white hair said. Merida stared. The boy was levitating in the air. She knew exactly who it was. "We're friends. Jack Frost, at your service." He perched on top of what looked like a shepherd's staff.

"My name's Hiccup, and this is my cousin, Merida." He sheathed his knife, but Merida kept her bow taut. "Um, where are we?"

"Ah, you're here! I'm North." Merida turned and saw a large, stocky man with a white beard. "Welcome to the North Pole!"

He gestured proudly around the room. To Merida's astonishment, the room they were standing in was filled with yetis, and toys magically flew through the room. Behind them was a giant ball with beautiful designs and random lights placed throughout. Fascinated, she relaxed the weapon.

"What is that?" Merida asked.

Jack chuckled. "That's a globe. You know, a physical representation of the earth." He flew up to the top. "This is where we are now, the North Pole. And this," he pointed to some islands lower down. "Is where you've come from, the Scottish islands."

"Sort of," North said. "You came from the Scotland several hundred years ago."

"Wait," Hiccup said. "We're in the future?"

"Yes," Jack said. "It's pretty cool, right? I didn't even know the portals could do that until ten minutes ago." He leapt off the globe and flew right down next to Hiccup. "My mind is still blown. I'm so going back in time to see my family again."

"That is another conversation, for another time," North said.

Suddenly Merida tensed her bow string and pointed it at Jack. "Why are we here? Tell us now!"

"We need your help," North said. "You see the Moon? He is real, and he has spoken to us."

"The moon speaks?" Hiccup asked.

"Duh," Jack said, flying closer to the skylight.

"What did 'e say?" Merida asked.

"Wellâ€¦" North said slowly. "Do you see this? That is Pitch Black and Mother Gothel."

"Who?" the cousins asked.

"Look. They're trying to take over the world."

North pointed to some form of device. Astonished, Hiccup watched as a town was destroyed by two very evil looking people. They were clearly real, but when he touched the screen his hand would not go through.

"Well they look pleasant," Merida said. "'Oo's going to stop them?"

"According to Man in Moon, you. You're the only ones who can stop them."

"What?!"

"Me?!" Hiccup stumbled backwards and the dragon caught him.

"And me," Jack said encouragingly.

"But, we dahn't know how to even begin fightin' them. I mean, Ah did free an immortal bear from its spell, and Hiccup did train dragons and all, but what are we supposed to do?"

"Don't worry, I will train you," North said. A trumpet sounded behind them. Some elves were bringing out plates of cookies.

"Hey!" Jack said suddenly. He pointed his staff at them, and a frost wave flew out and hit an elf.

"Jack!" North said.

"These," Jack said, "are Phil's cookies. Do not spoil them with your licking!" He flew back to the others. Hiccup and Merida stared in disbelief.

"What are you?" Hiccup asked. "Sorry, didn't mean to be rude. I mean, you can fly and freeze people."

"He's Jack Frost," Merida said. "What was it yew said earlier, Jack? Duh?"

Jack grinned at Hiccup. "I'm a winter spirit. I don't know how it works, but when the Moon chose me, I was able to fly and make snow and frost."

"Amazing," Hiccup said, nibbling a cookie. "These are delicious! Merida, you have to try one."

"Look," North suddenly pointed, and the new Companions noticed the moon shining down again. "He has chosen another Companion."

"So now there are four?" Merida asked. "Apparently." There was an image of a little girl, looking out her window. "Oh no."

"What? A kid?" Jack asked incredulously.

"No, she isn't little anymore, butâ€¦The fourth person isâ€¦Rapunzel."

"What's wrong with her?" Merida asked, swallowing the rest of her cookie. "Ah mean, other than her name."

"She's Gothel and Pitch's daughter, the one they adopted before they had their own."

"We're so dead," Hiccup said.

Merida knew what he was thinking. Rapunzel could be dangerous if she was opposed to their quest. She looked doubtfully at the image. But if they could get her on their sideâ€¦

"She dahn't look much like a warrior."

"There must be a reason," North said.

"True," Jack said. "At first I don't seem dangerous, I'm snowballs and fun times. But I do have the power to freeze people. And look at Hiccup, he doesn't look like much, no offense, but the moon chose him too. Obviously, it was because he trained dragons. Plus, she looks like she's nine years old in that picture. She will be older."

"Rapunzel must have something special inside her, too," Merida said, finishing his thought. "Well, at least we'll get another gal on the team. So, where is she?"

* * *

><p>"Are you sure we're in the right place?" Hiccup asked. "'Cause we seem to be going in circles."<p>

"Because we ARE in the right place," Merida snapped. "We're just still looking for the way in. Ah know my way around woods."

"But not these woods."

"It dahn't matter," Merida said in a thick accent. "According to what North said, this is the spot. But it's a hidden valley, with a hidden entrance, and a hidden tower, and a hidden Companion. It's going ta be hard ta find." She glowered at him from Angus's shaggy back.

"Hey, lighten up guys," Jack said, flying between them. "We'll find it."

He began tracing his staff along the wall, leaving a trail of frost patterns. They came to a section completely covered in ivy, and when Jack touched it, it died and fell away, revealing a gap in the wall.

"Ta da! Thank you very much ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much." Merida rolled her eyes.

The Companions walked through a tunnel in the cliff wall, and emerged in a beautiful summer valley. At the opposite end there was a huge tower with no door, only an open window at the top.

"We should go separately," Hiccup said. "In case we run into trouble."

"Right. I'll go first," Merida said. She nudged Angus into a gallop. Upon reaching the tower, she dismounted and began climbing with her bare hands and feet.

"Wow," Jack said. "Has she always been like this?"

"Merida? Yeah, pretty much."

It was a long hard climb but at last Merida reached the window and climbed in. It was a cheerful room, with homemade candles and books lying all over the floor. Paintings smothered the wall in fabulous shades of blue, red, yellow, green, and purple. A lot of purple. Curiously, Merida began looking around.

"Hello? Rapunzel?"

"Who are you?" a fierce voice asked.

Merida spun around and saw a confident girl with long flowing golden hair standing at the top of the stairs off to the side. As she walked down, Merida noticed a tiny green chameleon perched on her shoulder.

Now this is my kind if gal! Merida thought. _Feisty._ She drew herself up proudly and announced "I am Merida, firstborn of the

clan..."

But as Merida was talking, the chameleon actually punched his feet together, and Rapunzel whipped out a frying pan and hit Merida on the back of the head. The clang was so loud that Jack and Hiccup heard it from outside, 70 feet below.

* * *

><p>AN: So what do you think? Too cheesy for the portals to time travel? I thought it would be kind of fun to have Hiccup (the futuristic inventor in his town) be amazed and dumbfounded at the "modern" things in the 1800's and the magic things in North's workshop. There are little quips like this throughout the book. Which reminds me, Rachel torie B mentioned my reference of Miss Hattie from Despicable Me in the first chapter. I forgot to put this in my original introduction, but I've snuck in several minor animated characters in this book as well, so be on the lookout!

4. Chapter 4: Rapunzel

I'm back! Sorry for the long wait, hopefully everything's working now, so it won't happen again. No guarantees though. :P

* * *

><p>Chapter 4: Rapunzel.<p>

"I'm going in," Jack said as he flew straight up into the air. Wisps of frost trailed behind him.

"Wait!" Hiccup called. But Jack had already entered. Hiccup sighed and mounted Toothless. "To the rooftop, bud."

Jack entered an empty room. "Merida?" he whispered. Softly, he crept around to a small doorway and peeped in. It looked like an old bedroom, but had not been used for years. Instead, it was being used as a storage room for thousands of paintings, both on canvas and on the walls.

Bang! Rapunzel crept up and hit him before he knew what was happening. Quickly, she dragged him over to her wardrobe and threw him in next to Merida, locking the door in one smooth motion.

"Oh man, I should have gone first," another voice said.

Rapunzel turned around and saw yet another visitor standing on her window sill. Without a word, she threw her hair towards him. In an instant, Hiccup was tied up in about 10 feet of hair and inches in front of Rapunzel's angry face, a frying pan raised above her head threateningly. He was used to dealing with fierce blond girls, but Astrid was nothing like this. He gulped nervously.

"Who _else_ knows my location?" she growled. Her eyes were wide, and Hiccup saw them waver. He knew she was just as scared as he was.

"Um, North, and the Moon, and that's pretty much it. But they're not here."

"Good." She began to bring down the iron skillet.

"Stop!" Hiccup yelled. "Toothless!"

"What?" Clearly, she was confused. At that moment, the loyal dragon glided into the room. Rapunzel squealed and ran up the steps, unwinding Hiccup as she ran. Toothless growled and followed her.

"Whoa! Easy boy, she's a friend. Sort of." Toothless snarled viciously. "Toothless! Stop. We need her to like us."

"What are you doing here?" Rapunzel asked shakily.

"Uhâ€¦" He paused, trying to figure out how to explain it all. "It's a long story."

"Make it short."

"Well, the Man in the Moon chose you as the 4th Companion to stop your parentsâ€¦your adopted parents from taking over the world. Apparently we're the only ones who can stop them, and we need your help."

Rapunzel looked at the little green chameleon perched on her shoulder. He shrugged.

"You're telling the truth?" she asked.

"Yes!" Hiccup exclaimed, relieved. "I promise, we mean you no harm."

"Ay! Let me out of 'ere right now or Ah will do some serious damage out there!"

"Merida, you're not helping!" Hiccup yelled. "Jack, freeze her mouth shut if you need to."

"Hiccup!" Merida yelled. "You'd better let me out of here right now or I'll steal your leg!"

"Merida, be quiet," Jack groaned, his head still aching.

"Don't you dare freeze my mouth shut!" she warned.

"Help," Jack said weakly.

Hiccup sighed. "Merida's just a little feisty, but I won't let her hurt you. Can you release them? Please?"

"Oh, yeah, sure." Rapunzel opened the door and Jack fell to the floor. Merida stepped over him.

"Finally!" She stretched her back. "It was getting cramped in there. Why didn't ya just lock us in a room? T'would 'ave been much more comfortable."

"Sorry," Rapunzel said. "I guess I'm a little jumpy. I've spent my whole life in this tower."

"Wow!" Jack said, looking up. He was a little star struck.

"Yeah, my mother left me alone when I was 10."

"Harsh," Merida said.

"We can help you escape," Jack said, "if you'll help us. Will you come with us?"

Rapunzel hesitated. She looked down at the chameleon. "What do you think, Pascal?" The chameleon nodded. "Ok, we'll come." Jack grinned and flew out the window. Hiccup and Merida hopped on Toothless.

"Hop on," Hiccup said. "He won't hurt you."

"Actually, I do have one way I can escape. I've just been too scared to leave before now." Merida rolled her eyes.

Rapunzel stood on the window sill. She hesitated only a moment, before hooking her hair on a jutting wooden post and sliding down. Her feet touched the ground and she smiled happily, eyes closed.

"Have you never touched the ground before?" Jack asked.

Rapunzel flinched and opened her eyes. Jack was hovering right in front of her, grinning. "I have, but not for years. Gothel brought me here when I was 3, and every now and then I was allowed to go out, but when I wanted to leave the valley, we would go back in. By the time I was 14, she had left me alone for years, and I tried to escape with my hair. She came back, catching me by surprise, and I've been too scared to try since. It feels wonderful to be out again!"

"Rapunzel!" Merida called. "Hop on, we've got to get moving."

Nervously, Rapunzel mounted the big horse and wrapped her arms tightly around Merida. All the while she glanced around suspiciously, expecting Gothel and Pitch to ambush them at any moment. Hiccup and Jack looked at each other.

"We'll be lookouts," Hiccup suggested. "Up, Toothless!"

The boys took to the sky with a great gust of air. There was a moment's hesitation from the ground as Rapunzel took some of her hair and secured herself to Angus. Merida couldn't believe she had never ridden a horse before. When she was finally comfortable, Merida urged Angus into a gentle walk. After passing through the entrance, she changed to a canter.

Rapunzel screamed and held on tighter, but as Jack watched, she slowly loosened up and looked around. The wind blew furiously, whipping the end bit of her hair out behind her, streaming like beautiful golden ribbon. She laughed delightedly and threw her arms in air, breathing in the exhilarating wind; Merida let out an excited whoop. Hiccup saw Jack smiling almost shyly, but didn't say a word.

* * *

><p>AN: Yes! Now I've gotten them all together and they can start having some fun and adventure! As you can tell, this will have Jackunzel. I know, I loved Eugene and all, but I couldn't make it work. He does get a small role in Companions Return (my second book; see my profile) though! I will try to post the next chapter soon!**

5. Chapter 5: Corona

About midday, the Companions came upon a little hidden valley, about the size of Hiccup's Hidden Cove, where he had first found Toothless, back on Berk. There were seven different waterfalls. Some cascaded gently over rocks, some dropped straight down in a narrow stream, and others spread ten feet or more, dripping almost lazily off the slimy overhang into a large, chrystal clear lake. The turquoise water was so clear you could see straight to the deepest bottom. Red, pink, green, blue, and even purple coral structures seemed to dance and catch light of the sun. Fish of every color imaginable swam in and out of them.

"I've never seen so many waterfalls in my life!" Rapunzel said.

"Come on," Merida said excitedly. "Let's walk under them!"

The girls raced along towards the falls, the boys following behind. There was a dirt path that hugged the cliff walls all around the horseshoe shapped lake. Angus was left to graze in the nearby meadow, and Toothless had gone off to hunt.

Merida cupped her hands and drank from a waterfall. "Mmm! Refreshing. Try it." Rapunzel tried, but it mainly splashed her face and Pascal. They laughed merrily. "It takes practice. How'd ya find the lizard?"

"He's a chameleon," Rapunzel explained. "When we were younger, a bird had captured him and landed on the windowsill to eat him." Pascal shuddered at the memory. "I shooed off the bird, and he's been with me ever since."

"Fascinating." The girls continued along in silence for a few minutes, enjoying the beautiful cove. "By the way, sorry Ah was being so stingy earlier," Merida said.

"That's alright. After all, I did lock you in my closet."

"Ya, with a boy I barely know." They giggled. "Why were you left in the tower?"

Rapunzel sighed unhappily. "Because Pitch didn't like me. When I was little he would scare me, trying to get me to use the fear to do evil, but I wouldn't do it. He grew impatient and locked me away. I don't even know who my real parents are. The files were destroyed before I even reached Hattie's orphanage."

"It must be 'ard not to know your real parents."

"I don't even have a clue where they might be, or if they're alive or not."

"Which city was the orphanage in?" Jack asked, suddenly appearing beside them.

"I think it was Corona. But I'm not sure."

"Well that's where we're headed. We won't have much time today, but maybe you can find some clues."

"Let's have lunch first," Hiccup said. "Anyone want fish?"

Merida pulled out her bow. "As long as it ain't haddock, I'm game!"

Between Merida and Toothless, they soon had caught half a dozen big ones, and thanks to Hiccup's island experience, it wasn't long before they were prepared to eat.

"Do you think anyone knows about this place?" Rapunzel asked.

"I doubt it," Jack said. "Even I didn't know it existed."

"Ah haven't seen any signs of others," Merida said. "Ah've spent enough time in the woods to know these things."

"So...we're the first to ever come here?" Rapunzel asked, a gleam in her eye.

"Maybe," Hiccup said, also excited. "We should name it!"

As they looked around for inspiration, the sun had started its gradual descent in the sky, and its light hit one of the waterfalls just right. Instantly, rainbows flared in different directions, so bright and opaque they seemed not to be made out of light at all. One rainbow hit the water, giving the under water world even more color.

"Rainbow Cove," Rapunzel said. "No, Rainbow Valley. Please?"

Jack stood and floated into the air in a dignified manner. "I, Jack Frost, by the authority invested in me by the Man in the Moon, declare that this spot shall hence be known as Rainbow Valley. You guys are my witnesses," he said, sweeping his staff at his crowd of three.

"I wish we could stay here forever," Rapunzel said wistfully.

"Maybe we can come again," Merida said.

"Maybe," Hiccup said. "Depends how long North will allow us to stay in the future."

"Let's not think about that right now," Jack said hurriedly as Rapunzel suddenly looked downcast. "We have a mission first."

Reluctantly, the others agreed and packed up their stuff. Merida whistled for Angus and they went on their way, feeling remarkably

rejuvenated.

* * *

><p>"Welcome to Corona!" Jack said. "The City of Beauty."<p>

"Ah can see why," Merida said. "It's beautiful."

The Companions crossed one of the arching bridges that entered the city. Below, the water sparkled a bright turquoise blue that matched the sky. It was a wonderful day.

"Stone houses," Hiccup said under his breath. "Now there's an idea. That would stop dragon fire."

Jack laughed. "Just don't make the roofs out of stone, then it will collapse. There is a way, but you're not ready for it yet. It's a bit _too_ advanced." Hiccup took out his pocket journal and made a note.

Rapunzel slipped off Angus and walked under the gates, staring in awe at the mass of houses and people. Unexpectedly, her hair was jerked from behind. People and market animals were tripping on her long hair.

"Hey!" she protested. Jack and Hiccup helped her gather the long strands and held it up above the street. Merida ran over from the horse stall where she had left Angus.

"Follow me," Jack said suddenly. "I know someone who can help."

He led them a short way through the busy streets to an open courtyard. Four young red headed girls sat braiding each other's hair. Jack called to them.

"Hey girls, I brought you a customer!" The girls gasped and happily ran over to the Companions. Rapunzel smiled at them kindly.

"Thank you so much," she said. The sisters giggled as they touched her hair.

"It's so long and soft!" the littlest one whispered. "Is it magic?"

"Um, sort of," Rapunzel said.

"Cool!" they chorused. Immediately they laid out Rapunzel's hair and began braiding. Merida, though she didn't have much experience with hair, helped out. Hiccup and Jack took a lookout post nearby.

"You know, we should just let her have fun for a few hours," Jack said. "She's been locked inside a tower for 15 years, not much experience with the joys of life."

"Yeah." Hiccup looked over at the braiding party. Merida was holding the hair like a snake; evidently she didn't know what to do with it. Jack saw it too, and laughed.

"It's kind of weird seeing Merida working with hair," he commented.

"I know," Hiccup said, laughing.

Jack watched as a young girl about 10 years old ran towards him. His face lit up. "Hey, Penny! Haven't seen you in awhile. Man, you've gotten big!" She walked right through him. He turned quickly. "Penny!" He winced and looked back at Hiccup, eyes full of hurt. Hiccup was staring in shock; the girls had stopped braiding.

"You're invisible?" Hiccup asked.

Jack sighed. "Only people who believe in me can see me. When the children stop believing, I become invisible to them. Anyone who can't see me walks right through. Comes at different ages, but for most it's 10-13. They just stop. You all can see me since you've believed in magic from such a young age, and kept believing. But it's not like that for most people."

"I'm so sorry," Rapunzel said quietly. Her hair had been braided multiple times, and now didn't even touch the ground. Jack smiled.

"Well it's better now. Used to be that nobody could see me, only the Guardians and other spirits. They helped fix that. Anyway, let's lighten this place up a bit."

He formed a tiny snowflake out of thin air in his hands and sent it at a bunch of bored street musicians. Suddenly they smiled and began playing. Rapunzel smiled and began to dance, pulling in other people as she went around the marketplace. They joined in gladly, catching her contagious enthusiasm. She waltzed up to Jack, linked arms, and pulled him in. Immediately, she felt a little embarrassed, but Jack just laughed and joined in.

"Guys, we don't have time for a dance!" Merida protested.

"Oh come on," Hiccup said. "What's the harm? Pitch and Gothel don't even know about us yet!" Excited by the clapping citizens, he also joined the dance.

Merida didn't seem too happy about it, and she stood there a minute with her arms crossed. But finally, after a pleading glance from Rapunzel, she shrugged. "What's the harm?" she repeated. Rapunzel smiled and pulled her into the circle.

Now they were all laughing. Rapunzel twirled around, enjoying her new freedom. Then the song changed and turned into a partner dance. The tempo sped up and her heart raced. She passed Hiccup and Merida, and then, right as the song was accelerating for the finale, she found herself dancing with Jack. Her heart pounded violently inside her chest as she tried to grin carelessly into his icy blue eyes. His hands were cool to the touch, but not freezing. In fact, it felt strangely warm. The song ended abruptly and they were left standing there, slightly out of breath, still holding on. Jack broke off first.

"Well, that was fun. But we should really get going."

"Agreed," Merida said. "The sun is settin' fast."

"There's a boat on the other side of Corona, it will take us to the mainland," Jack said. "Bye girls," he called. "Thanks for your help."

As they walked quickly through the village streets, Rapunzel glanced up at the palace. "Who are they?" she asked.

Jack followed her gaze to the balcony of the palace. "That's the King and Queen of Corona, and the King and Queen of Arendelle. I forgot today's the Lantern Festival."

"Where's Arendelle?" Merida asked.

"It's another kingdom, not too far from here. It's a nice place. The queens are sisters, so Arendelle and Corona are often called the Sister Cities."

Rapunzel looked up at the royals. The queens were beautiful, and she could see their similarities. Both had long brown hair, today styled identically, big green eyes, and the same nose. Arendelle's queen looked down and smiled at Rapunzel, who waved back.

"Come on Rapunzel!" Hiccup called.

"I'm coming!" she called. But she looked back over her shoulder one last time before running down the docks. Merida and Hiccup had already taken positions in the middle of the boat. Jack helped her on board before taking his place at the opposite end. Merida looked back at the palace.

"What's happening?" she asked as Corona's royals were given a glowing lantern.

"Watch," Jack said excitedly.

Suddenly the clock struck 7. Together, Queen Primrose and King Thomas reverently lifted the light into the sky.

"It's the floating lights!" Rapunzel suddenly exclaimed.

Thousands of lanterns had been released, lighting up the evening sky. Jack noticed how the golden light made Rapunzel's hair glow and her green eyes sparkle. She was beautiful.

"What? The lanterns?" Merida asked.

"Yes! I could always see them from my tower."

"Years ago when Arendelle was attacked by the Southern Isles, and Corona went to help," Jack explained. "Arendelle won the war and Corona celebrated with the first ever Lantern Festival. There's a crazy legend that it's also secretly for Arendelle's princess. Supposedly, she was born right before the invasion began, and for her safety she was kept at an orphanage, hidden with the other children. But when it was over, they found that somehow she had been adopted. They searched, but couldn't find her."

They were silent for a moment, thinking. Rapunzel trailed her hand through the water. Everything was so still, so peaceful. Jack wished he could keep it like that.

Out of the corner of her eye, Rapunzel saw Jack watching her, just as he had been all day. She wasn't quite sure what to think of it. Sure, she liked Jack. She'd liked him almost instantly, similar to the way she had instantly liked the Queen of Arendelle. And that got her thinking again.

"Maybe the lights comfort the King and Queen. They always came the day Gothel visited me, and I loved watching them after she was gone, they calmed me down a lot."

"Wait, Gothel's visits corresponded with the lights?!" Hiccup asked. Rapunzel nodded, still enchanted by the lights up close.

"Row faster!" Jack commanded. He flew to the end of the boat and pushed with all his might, urging the boat on. Rapunzel gasped, suddenly realizing what was happening.

"Rapunzel, row for me!" Hiccup said. He stood up and whistled, and in an instant Toothless appeared, gliding solo across the lake. Hiccup jumped into the saddle. "Pull the boat, Toothless, pull it!"

AN: So this was mainly a fun chapter for the characters to get to know each other, but it also has a sad undertone. Poor Jack. :(

6. Chapter 6: Strategy

Chapter 6: Strategy.

"GONE!?" Pitch screamed. "How? How could she be gone?"

"She had help, I know that much," Gothel said. "The girl was too scared to do anything on her own. I found these." She put a black dragon scale and a lock of red hair on the table in front of them.

"So there's a red haired person riding a dragon," 15-year-old Mavis ventured shyly. "That shouldn't be too hard to find."

"Wrong!" Gothel said. "The dragon will have smelled like the person riding it, and the scents do not match up." Mavis stared at her, disgusted at her mother's sense of smell. "And there were three in that room. Unfortunately, I couldn't bring the third thing I found. Inside of Rapunzel's wardrobe there was a mini snow drift."

"Snow?" Pitch asked. He scowled. "Jack Frost. It must be." He turned over the table angrily. Mavis screamed and jumped backwards, unintentionally turning into her bat form. She hissed at her father. "We must find them. Jack Frost would not have done something like this without a reason. Come, Gothel, we leave at once!" He stormed angrily out of the room.

"What about me?" Mavis asked, now a human again. Pitch jumped back into the room and right in her face with incredible speed.

"You can't control your powers yet," he sneered. "You would be an utter embarrassment, so NO!"

"It's not my fault!" she yelled, snapping into bat mode. "I wasn't

born like this, mom made the spell! You know the least you could have done was make them controllable!" Mavis screamed at Gothel, flickering back and forth.

"Don't look at me," Gothel said calmly. "The vampire spell was your grandmother's idea. And before you ask, you may not go to her cottage for help."

"I know, I know. I only go if something happens to you," Mavis grumbled. "Just leave!"

* * *

><p>Rapunzel stumbled up to the campfire and dropped more logs on the ground, collapsing against a nearby tree.<p>

"Sorry they're a little cold, Jack froze them straight off the tree."

Merida rolled her eyes. "Och, I told him not to do that. But what does he know about fire? Or anything warm for that matter."

"Absolutely nothing!" Jack said cheerfully, flying into the clearing with more logs.

"Then do what Ah tell you!" Merida said. Jack just grinned playfully.

"Don't be difficult, Merida," Hiccup said as he and Toothless landed with a basket of freshly caught fish.

"He put frost designs all over mah kindling!"

"I thought they were kind of pretty," Rapunzel said.

Hiccup sighed and looked at Jack reprovably. "I would advise you not to get on this one's bad side. Now go be lookout while we roast the fish."

"Alright," Jack said. "But you know I can still freeze the fire from up there, right?"

"You'd better not!"

Rapunzel smiled. "Calm down, Merida. He's just kidding. It's his supper, too."

Finally supper was ready. For awhile they ate in silence; none of them had eaten since early morning.

"So," Hiccup said, breaking the silence. "Anyone got an idea how we defeat Pitch and Gothel? Rapunzel, what do you know?"

"Gothel's a witch, and she comes from a long line of them too." She shuddered, absently drawing patterns in the dirt with a stick. "She's pure evil, and so is Pitch. She can conjure up some pretty awful spells, so we'll have to watch out for that. Luckily, she still can't administer spells to humans by force. They have to voluntarily take it, so we're safe there, but she's really good with elements."

"What about Pitch?" Merida asked. "What should we know about him?"

"He's a spirit, sort of like me," Jack said. "Except he can vanish in one spot and appear in another, instantly. He also controls Nightmares: Physical horses, made out of black dream sand. Fortunately, they're pretty easy to kill off. Relatively speaking."

"And that's not all," Rapunzel added. "Pitch is also really good with archery. He would scare me when I was little by having me stand still and surround me with his arrows." Again she shuddered violently, reliving the horrible memories.

"We'll 'ave to work as a team," Merida said. "The good news is that Pitch isn't the only good archer around here." She whipped out her bow and fired multiple arrows in rapid succession at a tree 20 yards away. All her arrows were clustered around one small area. "Angus, fetch." Angus immediately perked up and trotted to the tree, where he began daintily pulling the arrows out with his teeth. "So what other talents do we have?"

"I have magic hair that glows when I sing," Rapunzel offered. The others stared at her.

"Wait, what?" Hiccup asked. "That's not possible."

Rapunzel shrugged. "Apparently so. It can heal people from any wound or sickness. I think. I had a lot of time to test it out in the tower, but I couldn't try everything. The best part? Gothel doesn't know about it." She smiled eagerly.

"Wowâ€¦" Jack said.

"So, is the magic what makes it so long?" Hiccup asked, unable to keep back the question that had been bugging him all day.

"Sort of. If I left it natural, it grows all the way down my back. But the first few years after Gothel left me, and you're going to think it's silly when I say this, she forgot to leave me any scissors to cut my hair with. That's when I found out about it's powers, and learned to control them almost like whips." She demonstrated by slinging her hair above them and bringing down a branch. "It's extremely strong, but also lite. Pretty useful."

"Yeah," Jack said in amazement. "Well, as you already know I can fly and make frost from my staff, and make snow." As he spoke, snowflakes swirled around the group, suspended in air. Rapunzel touched one, and it melted to the touch. "I can also control how my ice forms, like if it's sharp edged or not. Very useful against the Nightmares. My only weakness is if it gets _too_ hot, then nothing cold will form."

"That's not too bad of a weakness," Rapunzel said. "I can't fight with a weapon at all."

"Well you're pretty skilled with a frying pan," Hiccup commented.

"Ah'll vouch for that!" Merida said with a grin. "And if we're talking about weaknesses, I don't have one. Ah can fight with pretty much anything, so I'm good."

"Unless you can't find your bow," Hiccup said.

"That's true," Merida admitted. "But highly unlikely to happen."

"What about you, Hiccup?" Rapunzel asked.

"I have a dragon."

"Yeah, we noticed," Jack said sarcastically.

"Yeah, but watch this." Hiccup stood and saddled Toothless. "Come one, Toothless!"

Toothless shot up into the clear night sky. Hiccup skillfully maneuvered the dragon in spins, dips, and rises. At the same time, Toothless shot plasma blasts all around, and Hiccup avoided them. It was an impressive fire show, and for the finale they dove to the ground at lightening speed, and at the last second curved and flew straight up again. Rapunzel screamed and ducked into the trees; Merida gasped in fright, but Jack just laughed. Fun!

"Yeah! Go baby!" Hiccup yelled. Toothless smoothed out his flight pattern and began gliding down into the forest. "Did anyone just see that?!" A loud neigh distracted his attention. Looking over his shoulder, he saw a huge moving cloud, made of black horses. And riding on the front horse were Pitch Black and Mother Gothel. "Except for you. Dang it. Hey guys! We've got company!"

The sounds of the approaching army were very clear now. "Oops," Rapunzel said.

Jack grabbed his staff and Merida strung her bow. "Get ready!" Jack yelled.

* * *

><p>AN: So a fairly short chapter, again mainly so they can get to know each others' strengths and weaknesses in battle. I was going to make it last a little longer, but I don't like having too many cliffhangers in the middle of action, and I have a LOT in upcoming chapters. Anyway, thank you all so much for reading! I now have over 550 views! Aaaaah! Please leave a review to let me know how you like it!**

7. Chapter 7: Defeat

Chapter 7: Defeat.

The Nightmares surrounded the Companions, leaving them with no exit route. "You take the ones on the left, I'll take the ones on the right?" Jack said. Hiccup gulped.

"Well, look who it is," Pitch said. "Jack Frost, the invisible boy, Rapunzel, my rebellious daughter, the unknown dragon trainer, and the

unknown girl with the red hair."

"That's Merida to you," she said fiercely.

"Rapunzel," Gothel said. "I'm going to be nice for a change. If you come with us right now, we'll let your friends go. If not, then the Nightmares charge. And face it, Rapunzel, you can't win. You're not ready for this fight. Come home, darling."

"I am never going back!" Rapunzel yelled. "You are not my mother, and I am not your darling! You're a witch!" Gothel's face hardened.

"Fine, be that way. Charge," Pitch commanded almost carelessly.

The Nightmares surged forward in one motion. Instantly, Jack released an ice wave that pierced the first line of horses in front of them. Toothless turned and began blasting the others, while Merida mounted Angus and began firing arrows at the closest Mares.

Rapunzel had never been so scared in her entire life. She wanted to hide behind Jack and disappear, but she couldn't. Still, so far standing behind him was a good strategy. Jack felt the same way. Even though they had known each other for less than 24 hours, he found himself wanting to protect Rapunzel, and so far it was working. He shot more ice shards at the wild Nightmares. They were starting to close in fast.

"Hiccup!" he yelled. "Fly up higher and see if you can clear out some more of these guys!"

"Right!"

Hiccup and Toothless flew above the others, sending a continuous stream of fire onto the ranks of Pitch's creations. At first, it worked perfectly, but then came a nasty surprise. The Nightmares could fly. Immediately, it became a game of chase for Hiccup and the Nightmares. From there, everything went downhill.

* * *

><p>North put his head in his hands. He'd been watching the battle since it began, and was not happy. Things were not going well for the Companions, and they had only been fighting less than an hour.<p>

"Sandy, Sandy," he muttered. "We need you so much. Why did you have to fall?"

If only Sandy were there, he could help, and they could easily win the battle. But he wasn't there, and North knew they didn't have even the slightest chance of winning.

"Look at them, they don't have a clue what to do about the Nightmares!" he exclaimed to a random passing elf.

Rapunzel especially looked helpless. She was just whacking away with that silly old frying pan. Granted, it was effective, but not very efficient. Merida and Jack were holding up fairly well, but Hiccup was having a rough time. The Nightmares hadn't let him land since the

beginning, and it was getting harder and harder to avoid them.

"There are too many Nightmares, and not enough warriors!" North shouted. "That's it! Phil! Gather as many yetis you can in the next 30 seconds. You're going to help!" Phil nodded and ran off. "You had better be back in here by the time I count to 25!"

* * *

><p>Jack had an idea. "Cover me!" he yelled to Merida. He stepped behind her and prepared his staff. Suddenly he broke cover and shot out a 360 degree wall of ice that surrounded them. "Hiccup! Get in here!" he called as he began layering the walls thicker and thicker.<p>

Toothless dove down into the ice courtyard, and Jack sealed the ceiling shut. There were a good number of Nightmares trapped with them, as Jack had made sure the walls had been 20 feet away from him, an easy landing field for Toothless. As he kept layering the ice, Hiccup, Merida, and Rapunzel finished off the Nightmares. Now there was only the four of them, Angus, and Toothless, inside a small patch of ground. Pascal crept out of Rapunzel's braided hair, which was slowly coming undone. The Companions collapsed on the ground, utterly exhausted.

"There," Jack said. "That ought to hold them back for awhile." He turned to their small army. "How are you holding up?" he asked Rapunzel, his blue eyes full of concern.

"Ok for the moment," she said out of breath. She leaned against Merida tiredly. "But I don't know how long I can hold up. I can't do much. Why did the Moon choose me?"

"Ah dahn't know," Merida said. "But there must have been a reason."

"Maybe it has something to do with your hair," Hiccup said. Toothless moaned his assent.

"I don't even know what to do with it," Rapunzel said, petting the big dragon fondly. "Except heal some wounds."

"Whatever happens, we can't give up," Jack said. As if to back his words, sounds of fighting came from outside. Jack peered through a clear patch of ice. "Phil!"

"Who?" Rapunzel asked, wrapping a strand of hair around Hiccup's arm.

Jack laughed. "It's Phil and the yetis. North sent us some reinforcements!" He turned and smiled at the others.

But their respite wasn't very long. Shortly after Rapunzel had finished her singing and the others had stopped staring in amazement (except Jack, who still stared), they all felt a sudden change in the atmosphere.

"Is it just me, or is it hot in here?" Merida asked suddenly.

Hiccup sprang to his feet and looked through the ice window. "Um, guys? We have a problem," he said. "There's a wildfire."

"Elements," Rapunzel whispered. "It's not a wildfire, it's witch fire."

Jack gulped. "I won't last much longer," he said.

"Then we 'ave to make it count!" Merida said. "Can you explode this igloo?"

He shrugged. "I can try."

Merida's plan worked, and the shrapnel from the igloo flew in all directions, dissolving several Nightmares. Then they were in the thick of battle, fighting alongside the 20 odd yetis until one of them caught on fire and sent them all scurrying towards some secret portal in the woods.

"Cowards!" Jack yelled, freezing as many Nightmares as he could. There seemed to be no end to them, and they were closing in fast.

Merida was having a harder time now. The monsters were so close that she couldn't fire with her bow. She ran towards a tree, hoping to climb it and have a better vantage point. Smack! A Nightmare slammed into her, knocking her down and sending the bow flying out of her hands and into the fire. Before she could grab it, the string snapped from the heat.

"My bow!" she screamed. Pitch appeared out of nowhere and came towards her menacingly. Defenseless, Merida felt a fear greater than she had ever felt before. In pure terror, she fled the battle field. Even as she ran she felt ashamed, but could not force her legs to stop moving.

"Merida!" Hiccup yelled.

He and Toothless flew towards her, but more and more Nightmares blocked their way. With a thud, they crashed to the ground. Hiccup screamed from the pain, and Toothless leaped up and snarled at the remaining Nightmares with a startling fierceness. Then he grabbed Hiccup and pulled him out of the fire's path. Jack fought his way towards them, Rapunzel right behind, but at that exact moment, the heat intensified, and his ice melted the moment it left his hands.

Pitch laughed. "Give up yet?" he asked.

"Never," Jack spat.

"Oh you heroic types," Pitch grumbled. "You never give up, even when the battle's lost. Which, in this case, it clearly is. One friend has abandoned you, the other is unconscious, probably never to rise again, and you," he said, smiling at Rapunzel. "Your fear is giving me and my Nightmares energy. So basically that makes you a traitor that can't even fight. Oh sorry, I forgot you have that frying pan. Do you know how ridiculous that looks?"

Jack felt the anger rise up in him, giving him new strength. "Leave

her out of this."

"Oh don't worry, I will. It's you I want to kill," Pitch said with an evil smile. Without warning, he spun around a stream of his black dream sand hit Jack with incredible force, sending him flying backwards up against a rocky outcrop.

"Jack!" Rapunzel screamed. She was alone now, surrounded by Nightmares.

"Leave her," Pitch commanded. "She's no concern of ours. After all, what can she do? She'll never even survive on her own."

"The brat is still a danger, though," Gothel added, pointing to the woods.

"Hmm, we should go after her. She could return to fix the bow. Let's go everybody, the party's over!" And with that, Pitch, Gothel, and the Nightmares chased after Merida; luckily the fire vanished with Gothel.

Rapunzel ran over to Jack. "Jack! Jack, can you hear me?" She knew from her knowledge of healing that he was mortally wounded. If she didn't do something soon, he would die. And by the looks of it, so would Hiccup, though he was not as badly injured. "Toothless!" she called. "Bring Hiccup over here!" Desperately, she lay locks of hair over both Jack and Hiccup.

"How are you feeling?" she asked Hiccup, who, despite what Pitch thought, was not unconscious.

"Not good," he gasped. "I think my leg is broken, the non-metal one, as well as lots of other things. And I'm about to pass outâ€¦" Toothless moaned and licked his face. Pascal squeaked.

"I know, I know!" Rapunzel said. She began to sing urgently. "Flower gleam and glow, let your power shine, make the clock reverse, bring back what once was mineâ€¦" her voice trailed off, unable to continue. She sat there, crying.

"That really worksâ€¦" Rapunzel looked up.

"Jack!" she said happily, flinging herself into his arms. "You're alive!" She began crying again.

"Yeah, but just barely," Jack holding her close. "Hey, it's ok now." His hands were ice cold, but Rapunzel didn't mind.

"I was so scared," she cried. "Jack, Iâ€¦"

Crack! She turned around quickly and looked in the direction Merida had run, hoping to see her return.

But it was not Merida. Standing in the shadows was Gothel.

* * *

><p>AN: Alright! I'm a little pressed for time right now, but wanted to let you know that we are now half way through the story! The climax takes up the next 6 chapters. It's pretty big. Hehe.

Anyway, thank you for your reviews! I have been a little busy but I am going to reply. Thanks for reading!

8. Chapter 8:Despair

****AN:** Whoohoo! I've got over 1,000 views! Aaaahhh! Thank you all so much! ******

****Sorry** it's been awhile. This last leg of school is really hard on me, not to mention I've been a little preoccupied with book 3. My siblings are in the middle of reading my first draft for me and basically mob me at the end of each chapter. And they have the less intense down version! Anyway, I'll try to do better now that I'm at the climax!******

* * *

><p>Chapter 8: Despair<p>

"Oh Rapunzel, Rapunzel, Rapunzel," Gothel said pityingly. "You never told me your hair could do that. Of course, I ought to have known, since magic runs through your family and you come from Arendelle. But you didn't tell me, and that just made things a whole lot harder for you."

"Mother?" Rapunzel said, startled. "No, I shouldn't even call you that. Where's Merida?"

"That is no concern of yours. Come on, we're going home. Now."

"No!" Rapunzel said. "I'm never going back to that tower!"

"And I won't let you take her," Jack added, standing behind her. Now that the fire was gone, he could feel his powers returning. He also saw Hiccup crack open his eyes ever so slightly.

Gothel glared at him and raised her hand.

"No!" Rapunzel cried. "Stop!" She took a breath. "I'll go with you."

"What? No, you can't do that!" Jack exclaimed.

She turned to him. "Listen, I know what she's capable of. She could kill you easily," she whispered. "And I can't let you die."

Rapunzel turned and walked towards her adopted mother. _Snap_! Gothel snapped her fingers and instantly Rapunzel was gagged and handcuffed.

"In case you change your mind," Gothel sneered.

"Rapunzel!" Jack yelled.

Rapunzel strained at her bonds but couldn't break through. "I love you!" she screamed through the gag. Jack rushed forward with his staff pointed straight at Gothel.

"One more step, and she dies!" Gothel said, whipping out a sword and

holding against Rapunzel's throat. Rapunzel sobbed in fright, never taking her eyes off Jack's.

Jack gave Gothel a seething glare, but slowly lowered the staff. She smiled at him. "That's a good boy, do as you're told. Stop struggling, Rapunzel, you'll only make it worse." Rapunzel stopped and let herself be dragged away.

The moment they were gone, Hiccup leaped up and mounted Toothless. "Let's find Merida, then we can follow them to the tower." Jack couldn't respond, he was too angry.

* * *

><p>Jack shifted anxiously from foot to foot. "We could go in and attack them NOW," he whispered.<p>

"Shut up," Merida whispered rudely. "You'll give us away."

"Merida, be nice," Hiccup said. "They're not going to hear us from _outside_ the valley."

"Why aren't we attacking?" Jack snapped.

"Because," Hiccup explained impatiently. "In that small space something could go wrong."

"Something went wrong in the open, too," Jack pointed out with gritted teeth.

"Yes, but there's an even greater chance that something worse will happen. So we're staying here until Pitch and Gothel leave."

Jack frowned and rolled his eyes. "Since when did you become the leader? You're the youngest. _Technically_, I should be the leader, since I'm hundreds of years old."

"Ah'm sorry, _what_?" Merida asked.

"Because at the moment, I'm the only one who's got any sense!" Hiccup hissed. "And it's only temporary leadership in a time of crisis, since we're supposed to be working together! Plus, I come from the 14th Century, the past, which makes me older and the boss of you!"

"I was around before then, you know! That's how you could see me in the first place, remember? You'd heard stories and believed in me!"

"Stop fighting, boys!" Merida said. "This isn't going to help Rapunzel!"

"Shh!" Jack said suddenly. "Nobody move." Overhead, they saw Pitch and Gothel fly away on one Nightmare, with another Nightmare close behind.

"Who's on the other Nightmare?" Merida asked in a low whisper.

"Mavis," Jack whispered back. "Their biological daughter. Who also

happens to be a vampire. North thinks it's because Gothel's mother made a spell for Mavis that turned her into a vampire, but no one knows for sure."

"Freaky," Hiccup said. "I hope we never have to fight against her. Ok, let's go."

The Companions flew into the valley and up to Rapunzel's tower. The first room was empty, but Jack soon found Rapunzel in her room, sitting calmly on her poster bed.

"Rapunzel! Oh thank goodness you're safe," he said with obvious relief.

Rapunzel looked up, startled. "What are you doing in my tower?"

"Umm, we came to rescue you?" Hiccup offered.

"And what," she asked, getting up and walking towards them, "makes you think I need rescuing?"

Jack looked at her, puzzled. "Well, I know you can slide down your hair on your own, but we thoughtâ€¦"

"Well? I'm waiting for an answer." Then, to everyone's surprise, Rapunzel walked through Jack. They all gasped.

"You just walked through Jack!" Merida exclaimed.

"Who's that?"

"Rapunzel, why can't you see me?" Jack asked in anguish. He waved his arms wildly in front of her, but she kept looking straight through him.

"Rapunzel, what have you been doing today?" Hiccup asked suddenly.

"That is no concern of yours, I don't know you."

"But we were fightin' together just a few minutes ago!" Merida protested.

"No, I've been lying unconscious all afternoon. I fell when I was painting the ceiling. A silly thing, mother made me promise never to do it again."

"Aargh!" Merida screamed impatiently.

"No," Hiccup said, "it totally makes sense. Mavis is a vampire, right?"

"Mavis is my _sister_," Rapunzel insisted. "She's very nice."

"Right. Anyway, vampire-sisters can swipe your memory. That must be what happened!"

"Och, that evil woman! Both of them!" Merida said. "When I get my

hands on herâ€|"

"Gothel and Mavis are my family! They love me! Don't you _dare_ insult them!" She picked up her frying pan and charged them ferociously.

"Ok, let's go!" Hiccup said. He and Merida ran to the window and climbed up onto the roof where Toothless was perched. "Jack, come on!"

"Stay away from me, crazy people!" Rapunzel yelled out the window.

"Rapunzelâ€|" Jack said, hoping it wasn't true. But it was. She walked through him again.

That did it. In despair, he turned and jumped out the window, flying mournfully alongside Toothless and his fellow Companions. Sadly, they flew back to where Merida had left Angus.

"So," Hiccup said, trying to remain cheerful. "I guess we go back to North, and figure out how to snap her out of it, and then..."

"No, Hiccup," Merida said. "I want to go home."

"What? But we can't go home now! We have to stop Pitch and Gothel!" He was shocked.

"We CAN'T stop him, Hiccup! He's too strong for us!"

"But that was only because we were afraid of him," Hiccup explained. "Our fear gives him strength, I heard him say that himself! We have to fight it!"

"We can't!" Merida screamed, tears streaming down her face. "Look at me! Ah ran away from yew, all of yew, because he strikes terror into the brave! He puts fear in the fearless, steals courage from the courageous. How are we supposed to fight tha?"

"I don't know, but there has to be a weakness somewhere!"

"We don't belong here, Hiccup. We never did. How can we save this place if we don't even belong?"

"Oh come on, we can't just give up! Help me out here, Jack! Jack? Jack, are you even listening?!"

Jack glanced up at them and started to speak, but couldn't. He looked back down again.

"Face it, you're the only one left standing," Merida said.

"Can't you see what's happening?" Hiccup asked desperately. "Pitch wants us to split up. This is his plan!"

"I'm going home," Merida said. "And that's final."

* * *

><p>North was reading an ancient looking manuscript when the dejected

Companions returned the next morning. Jack immediately went to the giant windowsill, one of his favorite spots at the North Pole. North put down the book.<p>

"No need to explain," he said. "I saw the whole thing. I am sorry about the yetis, I couldn't get them to go back after Ted caught fire."

"We...we want to go home," Hiccup said. "We don't see how else we can help."

"I understand," North said with a sigh. "It is a big deal to fight and win over Pitch. I recently list two very good friends in battle, although I think I discovered a way to bring them back from exile. Thank you for trying, anyway. I'll do my best to defeat them on my own."

Hiccup looked doubtful. "You've still got Jack." He looked over at Jack, who hadn't moved since they'd arrived, and hadn't spoken since the tower. "Sort of."

"I wish you all the luck in the world," Merida said. "I really do. Goodbye, Jack." He didn't respond. "Goodbye, North."

"Goodbye," North said. He took out a round clear ball and gave it to Hiccup. "Take this with you, it will open a portal back to this very day, in case you change your mind." He picked up another, identical ball. "All you have to do is say where you want to go, throw it, and it opens. Like this." North whispered quietly and tossed the globe a few feet away. "Go on then, you'll be safe there."

"Goodbye, North," Hiccup said. "Thanks."

The cousins stepped into the portal, back to their own world and time, and were gone. Jack was alone.

* * *

><p>AN: Just curious, but did anyone see that vampire trick coming?! Oh, and bonus points if you can a) **tell me ***where I got Merida's last line from, and b) find the _Meet the Robinsons_ reference! I'll post the next chapter soon, I promise! **

9. Chapter 9: Retaliate

Chapter 9: Retaliate!

"Well," North said. "The good news is that I now know how to get our Guardians back. The bad news: I don't have time before Pitch destroys the world."

Jack looked up suddenly. "Guardians?"

"Yesâ€|" North said slowly. "There's me, Bunny, Sandy, Toothâ€|have you lost your memory, too?"

"Toothiana!" Jack cried. "Memories! Of course! North, where is Tooth?!"

* * *

><p>"Well it's about time you showed up! Your dad has gone berserk with worry! Where on earth did you go?" Astrid Hofferson demanded. She was carrying a yoke of water buckets across her shoulders, and looked very impatient.<p>

"Astrid?" Hiccup asked, confused. "Are we on Berk, now?"

"Yesâ€|Where did you go? Merida? Maybe _you_ can give me a straight answer?"

"You'll never believe us if we told you," Merida said.

"Where. Did. You. Go?" Astrid repeated. "And hurry, mom is making dinner and needs this water now."

Hiccup hesitated. "It's a long story."

"Well mom can wait." She put down the buckets and sat down. "Let's hear it then."

* * *

><p>Jack looked through the window into Rapunzel's bedroom. She was sitting on the floor, putting the finishing touches on a beautifully painted blue and white snowflake on the wall. Jack slipped in quietly.<p>

"Something's missing, Pascal. I just know there is. But I don't know what." At the moment, Pascal was dark blue, but when he saw Jack, he quickly changed into green and pointed excitedly. "What is it? Pascal, no one's there. No one's ever there." She walked over to the bed and flopped down dejectedly.

"Rapunzel, please! You have to remember me!" Jack pleaded, flying in front of her. He glanced out the window. "Come on, Tooth! Hurry up!" Jack sighed. "This is gonna take awhile."

Sadly, Rapunzel closed her eyes, trying to remember what was missing. In exasperation, she opened them again, and saw that it was snowing. In her room. Surprised, she sat up.

"Ok," Jack said, although he knew she couldn't hear him. "I'm going to get your memories back myself. I'll be back, I promise." He paused at the window and looked back; Rapunzel was now standing up, looking at the snow in complete amazement. "I never got a chance to tell you, butâ€|I love you, too."'

At that precise moment, Baby Tooth found Rapunzel's memories and opened them for her. Rapunzel remembered.

Images flashed through her mind.

_She remembered the first time Jack saw her, how he watched her all day long. **"I..."** She remembered dancing with him the town square, her heart pounding as she stared into his icy blue eyes. Rapunzel remembered how she had watched him freeze the firewood right off the

trees, tracing the wood with frosty patterns, and how he had protected her in the fight against Pitch. **"...love..."** She remembered when he had been thrown against the wall, defeated by Pitch's magic, and how much panic she felt in that moment, fearing him dead. She remembered healing him, being dragged away by Gothel. Rapunzel remembered how he had charged Gothel, wanting to free her, but stopping when Gothel yelled "she dies!"_

Then, the worst memory of all.

She was standing in her bedroom, facing Hiccup and Merida. Rapunzel walked toward them, and the shock was evident on both of her friend's faces.

"You walked through Jack!" Merida exclaimed.

"Who?"

"...you."

Rapunzel remembered Jack. And she heard him speak.

"Jack," she whispered. Jack was about to jump into the wind, but stopped. "Jack!" Rapunzel yelled.

"Rapunzel! Can you hear me?"

Rapunzel nodded and looked straight at him. "Yes," she whispered.

"Can you see me?"

"Yes! Jack, I'm so sorry. I didn't know. I didn't know who I was, and...I still don't."

Jack ran to her, putting his hands on her shoulders comfortingly. "Hey, it's ok. Tooth brought your memories back. And as soon as we destroy Pitch and Gothel, North will help us go back in time and find out who your parents reallyâ€|areâ€|" He stopped. A brilliant flash of light unexpectedly hit him square in the face. "What on earthâ€|do you see that?"

"Yes," Rapunzel said. "It happens a lot. Something's down in the living room, but I've never been able to find out what it is. The moon reflects it up here."

Jack flew down, tracing the moon light from subtle mirrors and windows until he came to the stairs again. Confused, he stopped, thinking a minute. Then he saw a thin crack that ran along the edge of one of the steps. Slowly, he lifted up the step and drew out a crown.

"Arendelle's lost Jewelâ€|" he breathed. "How did this get here?" And suddenly, everything made sense. "Ohâ€|"

"What is it?" Rapunzel asked. "And how did you find that? I've been searching all my life!" He turned to her, excited.

"First, let's review a few things about yourself. You were adopted

from an orphanage in Corona, yet Gothel said you were from Arendelle. You had no files at the orphanage, and you were born around the time of Arendelle's war, correct?"

"Yeahâ€¦| So what?" Jack could hardly keep still as he told the next part.

"Now listen closely, a few months before the invasion began, Queen Rue went for an extended visit with her sister Queen Primrose of Corona. The day the news of the invasion came, King Robert had come to fetch her back. Supposedly, there was going to be a big party when they returned, and many speculated that they were going to present their new daughter, the princess. However, on that day of the their return, a messenger came saying that Arendelle had been attacked. Concerned for the princess' safety, the King and Queen agreed that they should leave the baby in Corona.

"But! King Thomas and Queen Primrose decided to help Arendelle in the war, so they couldn't keep the child in the palace, since she would not be safe there either. Where would they hide the princess now? In an orphanage, and they gave Arendelle's Jewel to the orphanage director to make sure that the baby was not adopted. But then let's suppose that the director of the orphanage was a traitor. For some reason she wanted revenge on Queen Rue, or Arendelle in general, so she gave the child and the crown to the first person to come along looking for a newborn baby girl."

"Wait, are you saying that I'm the princess of Arendelle?" Jack nodded and placed the crown on Rapunzel's head. Astounded, Rapunzel turned and stared at her reflection in the mirror.

"And when the new mother found the crown and realized what had happened, she hid the crown with the child, in a secret tower, in a hidden valley, for fear that she would be arrested for kidnapping."

"But this is based off of a 'what if' and 'suppose.'"

"And a lost crown in a secret tower in a hidden valley. Plus, there is a small strain of magic that runs through Arendelle's royal family. That would explain how your hair glows and heals."

Rapunzel looked in her mirror. "I'm a princess? Like Merida?"

"You're definitely not a princess like Merida, but you are a princess like she is a princess. You like a lot like your mother, you know. And your dad. I'm surprised I didn't see it before. Now come on, I know the only way we'll be able to tell for sure!"

* * *

><p>"Hang on, let me get this straight," Astrid said. "You traveled forward in time through magic portals. And failed to defeat this Pitch guy, and now some old fat guy with a beard is going to fight him instead?"

"Yeah, that pretty much sums it up," Hiccup said. "But be careful or the 'old fat guy with a beard' will put you on the naughty list."

"Ah told you it sounded crazy," Merida said, ignoring Hiccup's last comment.

"Hiccup trained a dragon. I don't believe in crazy anymore." She looked off into the distance, thinking. "So, what are you going to do about it?"

"What do you mean?" Merida asked.

"If you could travel forwards and backwards in time through the portals, and the faâ€|uh, North is protecting the portals, what happens if he, you know, doesn't make it? If Pitch wins, couldn't he travel back in time, too?"

Merida gasped. "She's right! Hiccup, our world is in danger, not just the future world!"

"Oh no." Hiccup said in horror. "We have to go back."

"Astrid!" a sharp voice called out. "Where are you, lass?"

"And there's my mother. Sorry guys, I wish I could come, but there's no way to escape her now."

"Don't worry, I understand. Come on Toothless! Oh, can we borrow Stormfly?"

"Only if she comes back in one piece! And alive!" Astrid called as she ran back to the house. "Be careful!"

"I will!" Hiccup called as he mounted Toothless.

"How do I get on an unfamiliar dragon?" Merida asked.

"You're coming?"

"It's our world that's in danger. I can't not fight now!" Hiccup grinned.

"Hold out your hand and let Stormfly decide to trust you. Only climb on when she lowers her head."

Once Merida was successfully seated on the Nadder, they flew to DunBroch to get another bow for Merida, then returned to the North Pole through North's portal. Jack and Rapunzel entered at the same time.

"Well," North said cheerfully. "That didn't take long."

"You're back!" Merida said happily. She ran to hug Rapunzel.

"Yes, thanks to Jack."

"And Toothiana," Jack said modestly. "She's the one who keeps your memories."

"Hey, I also found out we have something in common," Rapunzel said. "I'm the lost princess of Arendelle. Apparently."

"No way!" Merida said. "You'll be a great princess."

"Well, we're not entirely sure," Jack added. "But we've got good evidence, and I know how to prove it."

"You can't right now," North said. "At the moment, you have to stop Pitch and Gothel from taking over the world."

"Sounds great," Jack said with a grin. "Where are they?"

* * *

><p>AN: So I finally brought in Astrid! Don't worry, she will get a bigger part in the second book. What does everyone think of the memory scene? I think it would have worked better in movie form, and I would have totally done it that way, but...the equipment I have now won't do masking, and everything I could find is too dang expensive.

A lot has happened in this chapter, but I hope you enjoyed it!

10. Chapter 10: Sky Battle

AN: Hmm. I just realized I forgot to do a disclaimer at the beginning of the story. Better late than never! I'll do one now and then re-post it at chapter one.

I do not own any of the characters or locations mentioned. All movies belong to DreamWorks Animation, Walt Disney Studios, Pixar, Universal Studios, Blue Sky Studios, and Sony Pictures Animation respectively. **I only own the plot and the idea that portals can time travel (if someone else has used this idea before then we have similar minds. I thought of it on my own, I promise). No copyright infringement intended.**

Also wanted to say hi to all my out of country readers! I just discovered the traffic graph thing on here and wow! I have people reading all over the world! United Kingdom, Canada, Phillipines, Mexico, and Australia are my top five out of country. I also have 5 people from New Zealand! Thank you so much for sticking with this crazy yankee!

Astrid: Yeah, yeah, we know. You're very happy. Can we start the story? This intro has gone for awhile.

Me: Where did you come from?

Astrid: Berk. You left me there in chapter 9, remember?

**Me: I know. Sorry. You're a secondary character in Frozen Companions though. That's even bigger than the Tooth Fairy.
**

Astrid: Fine. On with the story!

Me: Hey wait-

* * *

><p>Chapter 10: Sky Battle.<p>

Pitch sat on his head Nightmare, looking out over the kingdom of Arendelle. From his vantage point, floating in the dark, cloudy sky, he could see everything. Everywhere, people were terrified. It was wonderful, just wonderful! The time had come to destroy the kingdom, once and for all.

* * *

><p>The Companions looked up at Pitch. They were not afraid anymore, they were angry. Angry that he was going to destroy the innocent people, especially Queen Rue and King Robert, Rapunzel's parents.<p>

"What's the plan?" Merida asked.

"Don't be afraid," Rapunzel stated fiercely.

"Ah meant more specific."

"Merida, you and I will use our dragons to draw the Nightmares away," Hiccup said. "We'll lead them to that small canyon on the other side of Arendelle. Jack, you and Rapunzel meet us over there and kill as many as you can. Then we all go up and attack Pitch."

"Right!" Jack said enthusiastically. "Hopefully North will get Bunny and Sandy out in time to help us. Toothiana should show up soon, too. Let's go, Rapunzel."

They snuck away, quickly weaving their way through the streets. The dragon riders flew up and revealed themselves to Pitch.

"Hey Pitch!" Merida yelled. "Guess 'oo's back!"

As expected, Pitch sent nearly half of his Nightmares after them, totally ignoring Jack and Rapunzel's movements on the ground.

"Jack? Do you think if Sandy's sand could turn the Nightmares good again, my hair might do the same?" Rapunzel whispered as they entered the narrow canyon.

"Worth a shot," Jack said. "They know about your hair now, so it's no use hiding it."

Perched in hidden alcoves, the two waited silently for Hiccup and Merida. They soon came, with several dozen Nightmares hot on their trail. Rapunzel began to sing, and when the Nightmares flew through, she used her hair like a dozen thin whips and thrashed out. Instantly, the Nightmares dissolved into the golden yellow dream sand that Sandy used.

"Alright!" Jack exclaimed. "See if you can control what they turn into!"

"Dragons!" Rapunzel yelled/sang excitedly. She was rather enjoying this.

Pitch was about to send the remaining Nightmares to flush out Queen

Rue and King Robert, when he noticed large golden sand dragons flying towards him from the narrow mountain pass. "Sanderson!" he screamed.

"Nope!" Jack yelled. The Companions had snuck back through the town and flew up from the other side of Arendelle. "It's Rapunzel! Or should I say, Princess Rapunzel of Arendelle!"

Rapunzel was riding behind Jack on his staff twirling her glowing hair and singing quietly. Pitch scowled.

"Take them down!" he screamed. "And you." He pointed to a random Mare. "Go find Gothel and tell her to hurry!"

As the monsters bore down closer, Jack shielded Rapunzel from the onslaught, hoping that Merida and Hiccup would make it in time. Luckily, they did, and blasted the Nightmares with their dragons' fire. Pitch's scowl grew deeper, the rage clearly showing across his grey features.

"You're supposed to be dead!" he screeched.

"Hmm, I think you failed on that one!" Jack yelled. Merida and Hiccup dropped behind him. There were no Nightmares to protect Pitch now. "Rapunzel, hop onto Toothless."

_Rapunzel and Jack? Pitch thought. _Ha! Their weakness. My advantage._

It happened so swiftly that there were few watching from Arendelle who saw what happened.

Pitch kept his composure calm as he made an arrow out of the black sand. Toothless saw it and moved, trying to shield Hiccup from the danger, but in doing so, Rapunzel lost her balance and fell.

"Toothless!" Hiccup yelled, trying to regain control.

Pitch aimed the arrow straight at Rapunzel's heart. Quick as a flash, Merida brought out her bow and fired, and Jack released a powerful ice wave. Hiccup and Toothless dove towards Rapunzel. The ice froze her arrow solid, and it sliced through Pitch's arrow with ease, racing upward and piercing his shoulder. He screamed in pain. Rapunzel whipped her hair up towards them. One tendril wrapped around Toothless, the other around Pitch, bringing him closer. She swung up onto Toothless' blast.

"Fire!" she yelled.

Toothless fired a plasma blast; Pitch scrambled backwards in an attempt to avoid it, and Merida's second arrow hit him right in the heart. Pitch Black fell from the sky and landed in front of the palace, dissolving into nothing. He was dead. The Companions yelled in triumph and landed nearby. Jack covered the spot where he fell in a sheet of ice, just to make sure Pitch would never rise again.

"Well there's one," Hiccup said.

"Nice archery," Rapunzel said.

"Aye, thanks. That was some hair trick you did, Rapunzel."

"Rapunzelâ€|" a soft voice said from behind. They turned and saw Queen Rue at the foot of the steps. King Robert was standing in the door way. Rapunzel caught her breath.

"Yes," she whispered. She reached into her little satchel and took out the crown. "This was hidden in my tower."

"Robert, she's come back!" Rue cried.

"So, the legends are true?" Rapunzel asked. "Am I the princess?"

"Yes, my darling, yes!"

She rushed forward and enveloped her long lost daughter in a tight embrace. Arendelle's Jewel fell to the ground, unnoticed. Jack picked it up and took it to Robert, who was still standing shocked in the doorway.

"I think this is yours," Jack said. The King stared first at the crown and then around him. "Andâ€|you can't see me at all, can you?"

Hiccup laughed and ran up. "I have a feeling he will before too long. Here, your highness, we believe that this is yours."

"It was floatingâ€|" he said.

"Don't worry, Rapunzel will explain all about it."

That seemed to snap him out of it. He handed the crown to a guard. "Here, put this in safe keeping," he said. And with that he ran down to his family.

"Pitch!" a voice screamed from the shadows. "No!" The Companions turned and saw Gothel astride the last Nightmare. Jack shot at her, but she ducked and fled.

Again the King stared, this time at the frost wave that froze to the ground. "Jack Frost?" He looked straight at Jack.

"Well, I was wondering when you'd come around, Robert!" Jack said. "I thought all those years we played together were lost!"

The King laughed. "Sorry, old friend. Magic has grown harder to see since Rapunzel left me."

"You too know each other?" Rapunzel asked.

"Yes, but it's a long story. And right now, we need to catch Gothel!"

"How?" Hiccup asked. "Nightmares are fast and she's got a head start."

"Hiccup, do you still 'ave the portal ball that North gave you?" Merida asked.

* * *

><p>AN: Happy chapter at last! Rapunzel is reunited with her parents! Pitch Black is dead! But in case you haven't noticed, we're not quite done yet. Hehehe. Chapter 11 coming up this week!

11. Chapter 11: Death strikes quickly

Chapter 11: Death strikes quickly.

Gothel raced up the stairs, destroying them as she passed. She examined the kitchen thoroughly, and, finding it safe, crept quietly up the stairs and into the living room. Noticing the window was open, she ran forward to close it, but abruptly, Hiccup and Toothless glided in and took a defensive position. Frightened, Gothel ran towards the stairs, but Merida stepped out of Rapunzel's room, her bow pointed at Gothel. Now she was terrified, and her only escape was back through the kitchen. Jack stepped out of the shadows, blocking her way. She gulped. With a light thump, Rapunzel slid down her hair landed in front of Gothel, an angry expression on her face.

"Now, dear, don't do anything foolishâ€|" Gothel began.

"Foolish?" Rapunzel said, laughing mercilessly. "Stealing me from the orphanage wasn't foolish? Locking me in a tower wasn't foolish? Tell me, did you know I was the princess? Did you and Hattie work together to smuggle me out?"

Gothel didn't say anything, but she looked guiltily at the floor.

"Oh," Hiccup said. "So you did know."

"Yes," she said carelessly. "the three of us knew, although we didn't work together. That part was kept secret from us until she had escaped Arendelle."

"Who planned it all out?" Merida asked.

"Why should I tell you?"

"Because," Jack said coldly. "You are going to be tried for high treason and kidnapping, and if you tell us now, it will make things a whole lot easier for you later."

"I'm not going to court."

"Oh?" Hiccup asked.

"Yes," she said. "Because I'm not going to be captured."

Jack laughed outright at that.

"You've gotta be kidding me," Hiccup said. Merida stared at her in disbelief.

"Hate to tell you this Gothel," Rapunzel said. "But you're surrounded, and Pitch is dead. No one can help you now, your trapped. Face it, you've slipped, and now your paying the price." She advanced boldly and stopped inches from Gothel's frightened face. "Your time is over."

Gothel stopped looking scared andâ€|smiled. Jack watched her suspiciously as her hand slid behind her back.

"No," Gothel said firmly. "YOUR time is up!"

"Rapunzel, look out!" Jack screamed.

Simultaneously, he shot at Gothel with an ice spear and she brought out a knife. The spear knocked her backwards towards Hiccup, the knife only slightly grazing Rapunzel's hand.

"I will not just stand by this time!" Jack yelled.

"Toothless!" Hiccup commanded. "Circle!"

Obediently, Toothless spun around in a tight circle, flinging Mother Gothel out the window to her death with a horrifying scream. Without a glance out the window, Jack turned to where Rapunzel had collapsed on the floor.

"You ok?"

She clutched her hand tightly. "It stings..." she said confusedly. "Flower gleam and glow let your powerâ€|ow!"

"What is it?" Merida asked. "What's going on?"

"My hair...it's not healing it's hurting!"

Cautiously, Hiccup looked at the blade. "Poison," he concluded. "And most likely witch poison."

"That can't be good," Merida said. "What do we do?"

"Robert," Jack said. "Everyone get on Toothless."

"He can't carry three of us," Hiccup said.

Jack responded by picking up Rapunzel and holding the staff in the crook of his arms. "We'll have to go like this. There's no time to explain, but Robert can help us."

He leapt out of the window into the air. "Wind, take us to Arendelle, and fast!"

Immediately a strong winter wind, like that of a blizzard, swept through the valley and blew them towards Arendelle. Rapunzel clutched Jack tightly to avoid falling, and Toothless was having difficulty maintaining a stable flight pattern. As they whizzed over the forest, Jack looked down at Rapunzel, who was shivering hard.

"Are you cold?" he asked.

"N-no," she stuttered. "I don't know why I'm shivering. I c-can't control it! It's like I'm sick."

Now they had passed over Corona, and were above the sea.

"Don't worry, we're almost there," Jack said comfortingly. "I can see the mountains." The mountains surrounding the little city loomed larger, and seemed to be moving themselves, the Companions were traveling so fast.

"Jack! Shouldn't we slow down?" Hiccup screamed into the wind.

Jack looked back down at Rapunzel. Only five minutes had passed since Gothel's knife had made it's mark, but Rapunzel was already looking weak and pale, struggling control her spasms. As she gasped in pain, Jack could tell they were worse than they let on. "No," he yelled back. "We have to keep going."

"But the palace is right THERE!" Merida said.

"What?" Jack looked forwards again and saw the castle about 20 yards in front of them. "Whoa! Slow down!" he called to the wind.

Instantly it slowed to a gentle breeze, although with the previous momentum Jack knew they would be able to stop in time. Turning so his back shielded Rapunzel, they crashed through a large window onto the floor of the King and Queen's bedroom.

"What's going on?" Queen Rue exclaimed.

"Robert, you have to help her," Jack said, standing up on shaky legs. "Gothel got to her with a knife, and we think it was poison. You have to do something!"

"Like, maybe call off the guards," Hiccup suggested as he flew into the window. "They're shooting at us."

"Rue, take care of that," Robert commanded as he rushed to his daughter. Rue nodded and ran to the broken window, gesturing wildly for the guards to stop. "Rapunzel, can you hear me?" Robert asked urgently.

"It's draining me," she whispered. "I can feel it..."

Robert looked up and pointed at Merida. "You, I can tell you're good with horses. Come with me. The rest of you, try to keep her conscious!"

Merida followed Robert obediently, casting a worried glance over her shoulder. Realizing he was still holding her, Jack walked over to the master bed and laid her down gently, where Toothless promptly tried to lick her face.

"Toothless, get back!" Hiccup said, dead serious.

Toothless withdrew instantly, giving Rue (who was cautious around the dragon) room to get to Rapunzel's side.

"Rapunzel, baby, are you alright?" the queen gasped, cradling

Rapunzel's head in her lap. Rapunzel blinked, trying to focus. "Can you hear me?" Rue cried.

"Her eyes are glazed," Hiccup said nervously. "That's never a good sign."

"We need to keep her stimulated," Jack said. Suddenly it began snowing. "Cold is a good stimulant," he said. "Or at least it should keep her awake until Robert gets back."

"What's he going to get?" Hiccup asked.

Jack shook his head as he sat on the bed next Rapunzel and Rue. He was too worried to talk. Rapunzel shivered and arched her back as another magic blast shook her from the inside out; she screamed in pain.

"Hang on, Rapunzel, hang on!" Rue cried. "Daddy's coming, he's coming!"

"It's like she's not even here," Hiccup whispered.

The snow began falling more thickly as Jack looked into Rapunzel's unregistering face. Her beautiful, bright eyes were dulled and unfocused, staring into space yet shifting around the room. Jack gulped nervously.

I nearly lost her once, he thought. _How can I lose her again?_

* * *

><p>AN: I know, I know! Awful cliffhanger. But I must say, it's kind of fun for me, cause I know how it ends. What do you think Robert has that no one else does? And by the way, I wrote this chapter before I saw Frozen. :) If I my inbox is flooded with review/comments, I will try to post the next chapter tomorrow!**

12. Chapter 12: Miracle

AN: So I know you're absolutely _dying_ to find out what's going to happen, but if you want this to be _really_ dramatic, listen to "We've both changed" (from _Brave_ soundtrack). That's part of what I listened to when I wrote this chapter, and it was incredible! Depending on how fast you read, the music may not fit _exactly_, but it will be close. If you don't own the soundtrack, get on Grooveshark and play the song there.

* * *

><p>Chapter 12: Miracle<p>

Merida followed the King through the many twists and turns of the castle until they came to a bare stone wall. Robert pressed one of the stones, and a door, perfectly blended into the wall, slid open, revealing a stairwell. Torches lined the outer wall. Without hesitation, the King put the torch back in it's place and took off, Merida following. As they raced further and further below ground, Merida could hear little whinnies and stomping hooves. Finally they

burst out into an underground stable. As urgent as the situation was, she couldn't help but admire the fresh grass and bubbling stream that wound its way through all the stable stalls. Torches lit up the stables, but she could see skylights in the roof for natural light at day.

Then she noticed the inhabitants of the stable. In all fifty-odd stalls stood magnificent and beautiful creatures, some white, some black, and a few that were chestnut brown. They certainly looked like horses, but with one notable difference: there was a sharp horn growing from the forelock of every single one.

"Unicorns?" Merida asked, eyes widening in astonishment.

"Aye," Robert said. "Unicorn hair can do miracles, and some can even draw out poison. If you can find the right one." He stopped and closed his eyes. Suddenly he opened them again. "There!" he said, pointing to a particularly fierce male. "The hairs from his mane."

Merida quickly went up to the powerful white stallion and held her hand out.

"Be careful," Robert warned. "Daystar is the strongest and could spear you in a second."

"I know," Merida said quietly. For some reason, she spoke in Gaelic. "Shh, it's alright, Daystar. Ah won't hurt you. I'm a friend. And Ah need your help." Gently, Daystar put his muzzle into her hand and nickered, staring straight into her eyes. "My friend is dying, and only the hairs from your mane will take away the poison. Will you let King Robert have some?"

Daystar lowered his head down over the stall door. "Amazing," Robert whispered. "Your words are like magic...literally."

"You can take some now, he won't hurt you," Merida said.

Robert plucked several strands from the unicorn's mane, and though he winced, he didn't move. "Good, I have what I need. Come on, we don't have much time left!"

"Thank you, Daystar," Merida whispered in Gaelic.

The King thundered up the stairs. _It seemed to take a lot less time when we were going down_, Merida thought with impatience. But finally they burst into the hallway. Robert turned and fled down the hall in the opposite direction from where they had come.

"Where are you going?" Merida shrieked.

"We have to take a little detour," Robert called, running into the big kitchen. The servants, startled at the appearance of their king, bowed respectfully. "Do you have any soup?" he asked urgently to no one in particular, completely ignoring everyone's bows.

The cook nodded and quickly ladled out a small bowlful, sensing his distress. Robert tossed in the unicorn hairs and stirred vigorously. Just then Hiccup burst in, though how he found them in the big castle was a miracle in itself.

"You have to hurry! Rapunzel's slipping fast. I think she's unconscious now, or she will be soon."

"Can we use your dragon?" Robert asked.

"Hop on," Hiccup said. "I can't go with you, there'll be too many people, but Toothless can go on his own."

Robert gave the soup to Merida. "Don't let it spill!"

"Toothless, go to Rapunzel," Hiccup said.

The dragon nodded and bounded off, racing back through the long halls and up the giant spiral stair case. Merida struggled to keep the soup from spilling especially while leaping up the stairs.

"Robert!" Queen Rue screamed in panic as Toothless neared the room. "Robert, we're losing her!"

Even though they weren't at the room yet, Robert jumped off and took the bowl from Merida. "I'm coming!"

They burst into the room. Snow drifts and icicles were everywhere, accumulated from Jack's snow. Rapunzel was still held by Rue, struggling to breathe, and Jack held both her hands so tight it seemed as if he were the one dying.

"Fight it, Rapunzel! You have to fight! Don't close those beautiful green eyes!" Jack nearly sobbed. "Don't leave me!"

Robert nearly flew across the room and almost spilled the soup in doing so.

"Drink, Rapunzel, drink!" he cried.

He forced the liquid down her throat as her body convulsed in another spasm. In a final, desperate effort, Rapunzel gasped and her eyes flew wide open. Hiccup, completely out of breath, burst into the room and stood in shock, watching as Rapunzel's head fell back against Rue's shoulder, and her ragged breathing stopped.

"Oh no," Merida whispered. "No..." She turned into Hiccup and cried.

"Rapunzel," Rue whispered.

Jack stared. "No." He looked around frantically. "No, no NO! There has to be something else, something else is missing!" he screamed, leaving Rapunzel's side and flying into the air.

And then, it clicked. Jack knew. He flew to another window, the one they had not crashed through. Tearing down the curtains, Jack opened a pathway for the Moon's light. But the glass was split into segments, and it fractured the beams into tiny points of light spreading all over the room.

"Whatever you're doing, KEEP DOING IT!" Robert yelled.

Jack took his staff and drove it straight into the window, shattering

it into a million pieces. There was a full Moon tonight, rising majestically over the mountains and shining down into the room. Blinking in the sudden, bright light, Jack turned to look at Rapunzel. Bathed completely in the moonlight, she remained motionless, now hand in hand with her mother. Robert closed his eyes.

"Rapunzel," Merida said in Gaelic, sobbing. "Come back. Please, come back!"

There was a long moment of silence. Jack's heart slowed in breathless torment.

It has to work! It just has to work! Don't leave me, Rapunzel!

Hiccup and Merida sank to the floor, Merida still clinging to Hiccup for dear life, sobbing. Jack floated down, his feet barely touching the snow dusted carpet. Silence suffocated the room. Rue looked at Robert hopefully through her tears, but he shook his head.

"It's too late. She's gone."

I failed. All this work, and I failed her. In agony, he threw down his staff, coating the entire room in a thick sheet of ice.

Then it happened.

"Rapunzel Rampion, awake," spoke a deep voice, filling the room. Jack looked out the window at the Moon, which suddenly seemed brighter. He knew it was Manny speaking.

Rapunzel's eyelids fluttered, and, miraculously, they opened. Jack slid to the floor in relief. Rue gasped in delight.

"I hereby appoint you, Rapunzel, Guardian of Creativity."

"Mother?" Rapunzel asked weakly, looking up into her face.

"It's alright, darling, I'm here!" Rue said, as she and Robert embraced their daughter.

"Rapunzel!" Hiccup and Merida cried. They ran to the bed and climbed on like little children. Rapunzel left her parents and hugged her friends tightly.

"Where's Jack?" she asked, looking around.

Jack stood again, although he was still shaking slightly. "Hope you're not mad about the room," he said with a weak grin.

"Jack, it's just a room. We owe you so much," Robert said. "Thank you, old friend."

"You're welcome," Jack said. "Um, I'm going to get some food. I have a feeling we're going to be here awhile...talking."

"I'll come with you," Rapunzel said, leaping out of bed.

"Rapunzel, you just DIED," Robert said. "Absolutely not!"

"But the Moon brought me back. I'm perfectly fine now. Besides, I'm positively FAMISHED! I can't wait until Jack climbs back up here!"

"Oh!" Rue said, seeing her look at Jack. "It's fine, I understand completely. Go ahead."

"But..." Robert began. Rue elbowed him in the side. "Oh. Yeah, ok. Just don't hurt yourself."

"Don't worry, she won't, I'm going too!" Merida exclaimed.

"Um, no," Hiccup said as Rapunzel and Jack left the room. "You stay here."

"What? Why? I don't understand why they get to go and not me."

"You've never been in love," Hiccup said with a grin.

* * *

><p>Rapunzel and Jack walked in silence down the hallway. Rapunzel had no idea where the kitchen was, but Jack seemed to know where he was going. The freaky thing was, he hadn't said a word since they left. His eyes, ice cold, looked straight ahead. She had never seen him so quiet before. Finally, as they were turning a corner, Rapunzel decided to speak.<p>

"Jack?" He stopped walking. "Jack, are you ok?"

"Don't you EVER do that again!" Jack yelled, turning on her.

Rapunzel backed away, confused. "What do you...mmf!"

Suddenly her body was pressed up against the wall and Jack was kissing her. She melted. She could've stayed like that forever, but he had more to say and broke off.

"You have no idea how much that scared me," he whispered.

Rapunzel slipped her arms around his waist, mostly because she wanted to, but partly to keep him from falling. "I thought you were angry with me," she said, relieved. "I've never seen you like this before."

"We've only known each other for two days."

"And in the last two days that have been the happiest days of my life-even surpassing the day Gothel left me-I've been the happiest when I'm with you," she whispered. "I didn't know that it was possible to fall in love in two days."

"How about one second?" Jack asked. "And about two hours of absolute agony and torture a few days later to seal it?"

Rapunzel smiled. "It was 15 minutes."

"It seemed like forever."

"I know," Rapunzel whispered. "I know."

"Weren't you hungry?" Jack asked, suddenly remembering.

"Was I?" she said absentmindedly, running her hands through his hair.
"I don't remember."

Smiling gently, she leaned forward and kissed him again.

* * *

><p>"Good morning, Jack," Queen Rue greeted as Jack sauntered happily into the grand dining room.<p>

"Good morning, your majesty. Robert," he said, nodding respectfully to both of them.

He joined the other Companions at the long table. They all looked pretty tired; after all, they had stayed late into the night telling the King and Queen Rapunzel's story.

"Lewis," Robert said to one of the guards. "Please tell the cook to bring up a plate for Jack."

The guard paused uncertainly, then went down to the kitchen.

"Did you sleep well?" Rue inquired.

"Pretty good," Hiccup said. "But the bed is so soft!"

Merida giggled. "Hiccup's a viking. They don't use soft beds."

"Ahem," Lewis said. "I brought up the food. Um, where is he?"

Jack rolled his eyes and sent a trail of snowflakes to guide the poor man to his place. Astounded, the guards watched as the food floated into space and disappeared.

"It's moving," another guard named Wilbur whispered.

"Duh," Jack said. Mischievously, he picked up his knife and waved it ominously.

"Jack," Rapunzel said with a giggle. "Don't scare them."

Hiccup laughed. "How is it that your majesties can see Jack, when the rest of the palace staff can't?" he asked.

"Magic is a family trait," Rue explained. "That, and Robert and Jack have been friends since Robert was a child."

"Oh yeah," Rapunzel said. "I meant to ask last night but I forgot."

"Hmm, I wonder why?" Hiccup said sarcastically, grinning at the lovebirds.

"I still don't get it," Merida said.

"How do you know each other?" Rapunzel asked, ignoring them.

Robert smiled in remembrance. "I've been obsessed with magic, literally obsessed, since I was little. I would chase after so called "invisible" trolls, dragons, fairies, and unicorns. But I knew they were there 'cause I saw their trails. For as long as I can remember, I've been able to see magic working."

"Really?" Merida said, interested. "What does it look like?"

"Like tendrils of colored light, almost like smoke. Jack's magic is light blue, and Rapunzel's is pure gold. And when you speak Gaelic, Merida, it's bright green."

"That's how he found me," Jack said, picking up the story. "In the winter he noticed a lot of blue "smoke" around ice and frost patches, and wanted to know who made it. Of course he found me, and from then on we would go exploring together, looking for more magic."

"Did you ever find any trolls?" Hiccup asked interested.

"Oh sure, lots of them," Robert said. "I made friends with a group near the North Mountain. Man, the look on Grandpapi's face when I first entered the valley. It was in the middle of a fire crystal ceremony, a very serious affair. You should've seen his face when I interrupted it! Priceless!"

"And the unicorns," Merida prompted. "How did you get so many?"

"Now _that's_ an interesting story," Rue laughed. "One year when my parents were visiting Arendelle, Prim and I went walking out near the woods. All of a sudden, the crazy boy comes running towards us, begging us to come and help him rescue a unicorn. Primrose had no idea who he was and ran back to the palace, but I, being the oldest, had visited before and trusted him."

"We rescued the unicorn," Robert said. "And as time went on I found others in need of a home, so I built the underground sanctuary for them. My hope is to one day let them live in the wild again."

"Wow," Hiccup said. "That is amazing." Then he noticed the time. "Well guys, we'd better get going. We have a long way to get to the Pole."

"Mother, can I go with them?" Rapunzel asked. "I'll come right back, I promise."

Rue was reluctant to let her daughter go again, but she saw how much Jack loved Rapunzel, and knew she'd be safe. "I guess it's fine with me," she said. "Just...stay safe."

* * *

><p>That afternoon, the Companions entered North's workshop. North greeted them cheerfully from where he was talking with Toothiana.<p>

"Welcome back!" he said. "Merida, Hiccup, Rapunzel, meet Toothiana,

Guardian of Memories."

"Hi!" Tooth said, waving.

"Oh!" Rapunzel said suddenly. "I just remembered what else happened last night! The Moon brought me back and made me a Guardian."

"What?" North and Tooth asked, astonished.

"Rapunzel...died last night," Hiccup explained hesitantly. "For 30 seconds." North looked surprised.

"A minute," Jack protested. "It was definitely a minute. Or five. Maybe it was five."

"Either way," Rapunzel said. "I'm back. The Moon told me to wake up, so I did. Then he said I was the Guardian of Creativity. North, what does this mean?"

"Wow, I admit, I was not expecting this to happen so soon. 'Shortly after Pitch is defeated' was a little vague," North said, looking at Hiccup.

"What are you talking about?" Hiccup asked.

"Er...never mind. Time travel and whatnot," Jack said quickly. Merida looked at him quizzically.

"Right," North said. "We have a new Guardian! This is wonderful! Let me see, Guardian of Creativity, was it? Well, you won't get a holiday like Christmas or Easter, Creativity is all the time. You will protect the Creativity in children, help them in all arts."

"Well, I do like painting!"

"Not just painting, Rapunzel," North said, getting excited. "Writing, singing, poetry, sculpting, music, the list goes on!"

"Ooh, fun!" Toothiana said, fluttering excitedly.

"That's quite a lot," Rapunzel said, somewhat nervously.

"You've been given a very important job," North said, nodding seriously. "But of all people, you are certainly the most capable of it."

"Piece of cake!" Jack said, winking.

"And now," North said. "To get you two back home."

"Do we have to?" Merida asked.

"You need to be in your own time," Jack said gently. "You can't stay here forever."

"We'll go get the portal ready while you all say goodbye," Tooth said, leading North away.

"I really wish you didn't have to go," Rapunzel said. "I could use

your help, Merida."

"What? In becoming a princess? You don't want me for that, trust me. You'll do fine, don't worry. And you'll make a fantastic Guardian."

Merida hugged her friend empathetically. A few feet away, Jack and Hiccup were also saying goodbye.

"By the way," Jack said. "I'm sorry for challenging your leadership yesterday."

"Oh man, was that just yesterday? It seems ages ago. But hey, don't worry about it. We are all under a lot of stress, you especially."

"You never miss a thing, do you?" Jack asked, smiling.

"A lot more than Merida, anyway," Hiccup said. "She's pretty clueless, at least in this matter."

"Goodbye, Hiccup," Rapunzel said, walking over. "Thanks for letting us use Toothless so much." She pet the dragon fondly.

"No problem."

"Ready?" Toothiana asked. They nodded reluctantly.

After one last round of goodbyes, Merida and Hiccup stepped through the portal and disappeared into their own world.

"Will we ever see them again?" Rapunzel asked.

"It's very complicated," North said slowly, and looking a little guilty. "I'll explain more to you later, it's a lot of information to take in. Right now, they deserve a nice long rest. And so do you."

"Hiyah!" Bunnymund slammed open the door, Sandy right behind. "Don't worry, mate! We're here now, just let 'em show their little faces and we'll beat them up!" He ran around the room, holding his boomerangs up threateningly. Sandy stood in the doorway and slapped a hand to his face, embarrassed. He tried to get Bunny's attention, but, as usual, couldn't.

"Um, hi, Bunny," Jack said. "Glad to see you could make it."

"Pleasure to be here, just sorry it took us so long," Bunny said, bouncing around the room and looking around suspiciously. North! Open up a portal to Pitch immediately!"

"I'm afraid that's not possible," North said.

Rapunzel threw her hair out and wrapped Bunny up completely. "Sorry, you were making me dizzy," she said. "Pitch is dead."

"Dead?" Bunny asked.

"Since yesterday," Jack said.

"Oh, well crisis averted. Who's this?" he asked, looking at his captor.

"Everyone," Jack said, putting his arm around her, "I'd like you to meet Rapunzel."

* * *

><p>Once again, Merida and Hiccup found themselves on Berk, this time in Astrid's house.<p>

"Oh hi, you're back! Did you save the world?" she asked.

"Aye!" Merida said. "Hiccup and Toothless tripped Gothel out of the tower window, and she fell to her doom! It was all very exciting!"

"Don't leave yourself out," Hiccup said. "Merida here killed Pitch with her amazing archery skills."

"Oh stop it," she said, giggling. "Jack froze one of them solid, and Toothless blasted the other one."

"I'm sure you were both wonderful," Astrid said, kissing Hiccup. Merida rolled her eyes. "Just promise you'll bring me next time."

Hiccup and Merida looked at each other, slightly shocked. "Next time?!"

* * *

><p>AN: Oh yes, Hiccup and Merida! There will be a next time! And a time after that, and a time after that! You two have no idea what's coming!

**So kind of a long chapter, but I decided last minute to combine chapters 12 and 13, since both were relatively short on their own. Please review and let me know what you think! **

13. Chapter 13: Epilogue

The sun feels pleasantly warm on my pale skin. Father always believed that it burned me, because the first time I felt it I cried. I was only startled. But I was too scared to contradict him, and so lived my entire life in darkness.

Being a vampire is a curse, not a blessing as my parents believed. Sure, I can fly. But everyone is scared of me, and I'm scared of them. I'm afraid they will hurt me, drive me away from my home because they hate me. Not to mention I cannot control the constant shapeshifting from bat to human. I never know when it will happen. I have been a vampire for three years, and still I do not know.

I live my life in fear. I look up at the burning sun, so far away. I wish I could escape the life I lead, but I don't know how to stop living in fear and darkness. I must do so, to be safe. But I wish, more than anything, that I could do so in the sunlight.

"Mavis!" A harsh, crackling voice calls from inside the small cottage. "It's time for your lessons!"

"Coming, grandmother."

One last time I look up at the sun. I want to stay out here forever, but I swallow my desire and walk into the dark, fear-filled room that is my home. Father was right, he always was. I don't know why I doubt him, why I always forget.

Light is bad. Good is bad. Everything in the outside world is bad.

Grandmother Maggie waits by the caldron.

Oh my. It seems that our dear Companions were so busy and concerned with Rapunzel's near death experience that they forgot one tiny detail... We'll see how that affects the events in the next book. Congrats to any sharp-eyed readers who realized I left this unfinished thread hanging in the previous chapter. (Truth be told, I didn't realize it myself until I finished writing the book! All I had of Mavis was the cradle scene from chapter 1. I had to go back over and write her in!)

Thank you all so much for reading! I really hope you enjoyed it as much as I enjoyed writing it! Please review and let me know what you thought. And when you're finished with that, check out my other books! The other ones in this series are Frozen Companions, Companions Divided, Stone-Age Companions, Companion Files, and Courage in Dark Places (short story). For those new to this website**, you can click on my name at the top of the page, which will take you to my author profile. Scroll down and the links to my stories will be at the bottom.**

End
file.